

School of Theology at Claremont



1001 1371231

OUR PARISH CHURCH.
SERMONS TO CHILDREN.



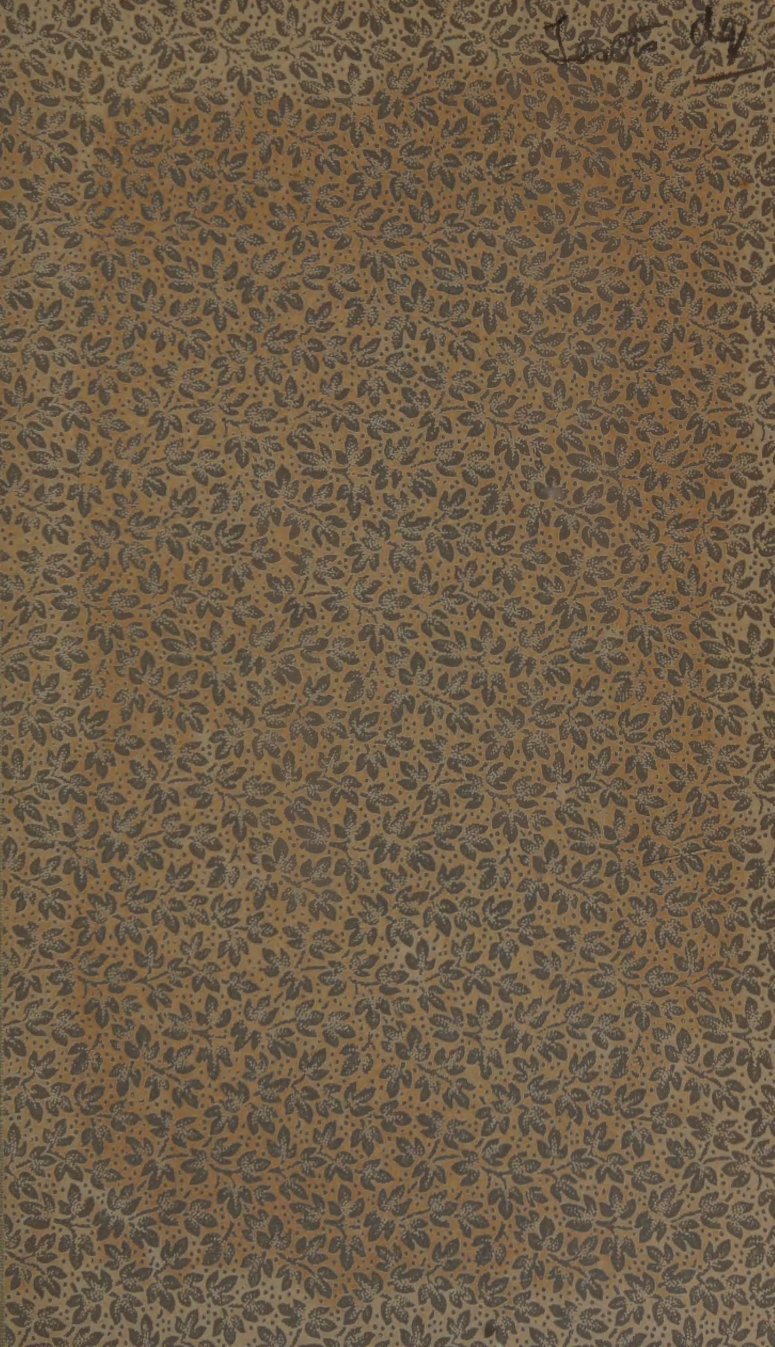
BARING-GOULD



The Library
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT CLAREMONT

WEST FOOTHILL AT COLLEGE AVENUE
CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA

Leaf 19



SV
4315
B3
1886

Our Parish Church.

TWENTY ADDRESSES TO CHILDREN ON GREAT
TRUTHS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

BY THE

REV. S. BARING GOULD, M.A.,

AUTHOR OF "VILLAGE PREACHING FOR A YEAR," "THE MYSTERY OF SUFFERING,"
'SERMONS TO CHILDREN,' "THE PASSION OF JESUS,"
"THE SEVEN LAST WORDS," ETC.

Second Edition.

London:

SKEFFINGTON & SON, 163, PICCADILLY.

—
1886.

Theology Library
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT CLAREMONT
California

Preface.

IN the twenty little sermons, or addresses to children, in this book, I have sought to teach doctrine, and teach it very definitely. A Clergyman, who had been brought up in Scottish Calvinism, said once to me, "We were reared under a clear, sharp-cut system, that seized on our intellects. Now I am in the Church of England, I find myself without a system. I know that the Calvinistic doctrine is false, but I can no more work it out of me than Augustine could work himself clear of his Manicheeism. That also was a logical system. Calvinism is in me, poisoning my blood, like an iron barb, that festers, but can never be extracted." The hold Calvinism exercises over men is due to this—that it is a definite logical creed. And the hold Roman Catholicism exercises is due also, in great part, to the fact that it is a system, and this system is impressed very emphatically and distinctly on children's minds, whilst forming. Those who are growing up about us grow up without any definite dogmatic teaching, and so their souls lay hold of nothing. Roses if expected to flourish must be given something solid which their roots can grasp. So with children's minds. We give them plenty of moral teaching, but very little plain, elementary Catholic truth, put before them in such a way, that they can grasp and stay themselves by it. In after life they want this; and they are blown about with every wind of doctrine, and blown over by the blast of unbelief, because their mental rootlets have hold of nothing solid, but run in the excellent rich mould of morality. Morality feeds the roots, but doctrine holds them firm. I would urge those who make use of this little book to catechise again and again on the subjects of these discourses, till the children have assimilated the teaching.

*Lew Trenchard,
Easter, 1885.*

Contents.

SERMON I.

THE CHURCHYARD.

REV. XIV. 13. (*Version in Burial Service.*) PAGE

"I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, From henceforth blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; even so, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours (and their works do follow them)." *

SERMON II.

THE PORCH.

I. THE NATURAL RIGHTS OF MAN.

ROM. XIII. 7.

"Render to all their dues." 9

SERMON III.

THE PORCH.

II. THE ACQUIRED RIGHTS OF MAN.

ROMANS XIII. 7.

"Render to all their dues : tribute to whom tribute is due ; custom to whom custom ; fear to whom fear ; honour to whom honour." 17

SERMON IV.

THE FONT.

I. THE SPIRITUAL KINGDOM.

S. JOHN III. 6.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh ; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." 25

SERMON V.

THE FONT.

II. SPIRITUAL GRACES.

PAGE

ROM. v. 2.

"This Grace wherein we stand."

32

SERMON VI.

THE FONT.

III. PREVENTING AND SANCTIFYING GRACE.

2 COR. XII. 9.

"My Grace is sufficient for thee."

40

SERMON VII.

NAVE AND AISLES.

HOLINESS, I. TRUTHFULNESS.

LEVIT. XI. 44.

"I am the Lord your God : ye shall therefore be holy ; for I am holy."

49

SERMON VIII.

NAVE AND AISLES.

HOLINESS, II. RIGHTEOUSNESS.

PSALM XIV. 5.

"God is in the generation of the righteous."

58

SERMON IX.

NAVE AND AISLES.

HOLINESS, III. FAITHFULNESS.

REV. II. 10.

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

67

SERMON X.*THE PILLARS.*

MAIN TRUTHS, I. THE END OF CREATION.	PAGE
--------------------------------------	------

ACTS XVII. 28.	
----------------	--

"In Him we live, and move, and have our being."	75
---	----

SERMON XI.*THE PILLARS.*

MAIN TRUTHS, II. THE WILL OF MAN.	
-----------------------------------	--

PSALM CXLIII. 10.	
-------------------	--

"Teach me to do Thy Will ; for Thou art my God."	85
--	----

SERMON XII.*THE PILLARS.*

MAIN TRUTHS, III. SIN.	
------------------------	--

S. JOHN VIII. 34.	
-------------------	--

"Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin."	94
---	----

SERMON XIII.*THE PILLARS.*

MAIN TRUTHS, IV. THE EFFECTS OF SIN.	
--------------------------------------	--

S. JAMES I. 15.	
-----------------	--

"Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."	103
---	-----

SERMON XIV.*THE PULPIT.*

REPENTANCE.	
-------------	--

ROMANS II. 4.	
---------------	--

"The goodness of God leadeth thee to Repentance."	III
---	-----

SERMON XV.
THE PRAYER DESK.

PRAYER.

PAGE

S. JOHN XVI. 24.

"Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." 120

SERMON XVI.
THE SCREEN.

THE CHURCH VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE.

EPH. III. 14, 15.

"Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." 129

SERMON XVII.
THE WALLS.

THE MARKS OF THE CHURCH.

S. JOHN X. 16.

"There shall be one fold, and one Shepherd." 137

SERMON XVIII.
THE CHANCEL.

PRAISE.

PSALM XCIX. 9.

"O magnify the Lord our God, and worship Him upon His holy hill: for the Lord our God is holy." 145

SERMON XIX.
THE ALTAR.

I. THE SACRIFICE.

S. LUKE XXII. 19.

"This do in remembrance of Me." 153

SERMON XX.
THE ALTAR.

II. THE COMMUNION.

S. JOHN VI. 56.

"He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him." 161

Our Parish Church.

SERMON I.

THE CHURCHYARD.

REV. XIV. 13. (*Version in Burial Service.*)

"I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, From henceforth blessed are the dead which die in the Lord ; even so, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours (and their works do follow them). *"

ONE Saturday afternoon, three or four years ago, I was in the village inn of a small place in Tyrol (Oetz in the Oetz Thal), when I heard a sound outside of voices murmuring a litany, and a tramp of feet going by. I went to the window, and saw a quantity of children, boys and girls, walking in procession through the village street,

* Perhaps it is a curious instance of the extent to which prejudice will carry men, that the Reformers should have cut off the last paragraph from the message of the Holy Spirit ; because of their dislike to the emphasising of the value of good works.

with none of older years than fourteen or fifteen with them; and they all carried baskets or posies of flowers, and the little maids had their aprons held out full of buttercups and forget-me-nots and wild roses. The train of little people went up the hill to the churchyard. I was puzzled to know what this meant, so I asked the landlady of the inn; and she answered, "Oh, it is the children going to deck the graves. They do it every Saturday, from the opening of the first spring blossoms till the frosts come and kill all the flowers." After hearing that, I was curious to go up to the cemetery, and see what they were about.

There I found the churchyard full of the children, not jumping over the graves, climbing over the stones, but busy, very still, adorning the graves with flowers. One grave was covered with a perfect quilt of buttercups and forget-me-nots, gold and blue. I found that this was the grave of the old parish priest, who had baptized the children, and prepared the elder ones for confirmation, and who had died the year before. So the little children were showing their love and gratitude to the dear good old man by making his grave a blaze of beauty.

Some of the children were orphans, and they were decorating the graves of their fathers or mothers, others were engaged in adorning the small mounds where slept baby brothers and sisters.

It was a pretty and a moving sight.

I do not know whether this custom prevails elsewhere, that was the only place where I have seen it done. But I will tell you what I have seen, over and over again, in Germany, and in Austria, and in France, and in Belgium. In the autumn, before All Saints' Day, and the next day, which is there called All Souls' Day, the people do up the graves of their relations with flowers and leaves. All Saints' Day is November 1, so there are only late flowers to be got, mostly chrysanthemums, but it is wonderful what beautiful wreaths they make of leaves, turned crimson and yellow by the frost, and with the red berries of the dog-wood, or cornell tree, or with the feathery seeds of the travellers' joy; these all make lovely little crosses and crowns, which are laid on the graves.

I will tell you something else that I have seen—this time in Bohemia, and in the mountains. One early morning in summer, I was about to start on a walk, when I saw that a funeral was about to take place in the churchyard. So I attended it; the coffin was very small, and painted white; and all the mourners carried little coils of wax taper, which were lighted. The dark mountains covered with forest stood around: the hour was so early that the sun was not yet shining over them. Presently, however, the gilt cross on the Church spire shone and blazed like a cross of pure sunlight,—the sun had touched it. Two minutes after the sun peeped over the mountain tops down on the little cluster of mourners round

the grave, who were kneeling, and they had just put their tiny lighted tapers in a shining ring round the baby's grave.

Now—what, you may ask, is the meaning of the flowers and the lights? I think they have a meaning. Let us take the lights first.

The old heathens used to represent death by an extinguished torch; and so on old heathen monuments a torch turned upside down and put out was represented. Well—the early Christians wanted to show that the life was *not* gone out, that there was a life above and beyond this natural life of the body. So to shew their faith in this supernatural life, they were wont to carry lights at funerals, even in the day, and the custom was continued, on to the present time in some places.

Then, as to the flowers.

By flowers we show our faith in the resurrection of the body. As flowers fade and die away, so do our bodies. And as flowers spring out of the earth again in new loveliness, so with the bodies, sown in corruption, they are raised in incorruption; sown in dishonour, they are raised in glory; sown in weakness, they are raised in power; sown natural bodies, they are raised spiritual bodies.

Now that I am speaking to you of the churchyard, and of the graves that are in it, I shall have to tell you something about that Article of the Creed, "I believe in the Communion of Saints."

We think too little of the dead, of those who have gone before us. But there are some people who think too much. These are the Chinese,—the religion of the Chinese is chiefly made up of showing love and reverence to the dead. Whether they have any belief in a God is doubtful. It has been a subject on which those who have enquired into the religion of the Chinese have not been able to convince themselves. And when Missionaries went among the Chinese, they had great difficulty in finding a Chinese word for God, so little was the idea of God in the minds of these people ;—but if they do not believe in God, they do believe in life after death, only they ignorantly think that the spirits of the dead need all those things which their bodies wanted in life ; so that their religious rites consist in providing their dead relations with clothes, and food, and money. However, they provide these necessities in a very odd way. They paint little coats and hats and shoes, or print on paper a number of coins, or draw dishes full of meat, or fruit, or vegetables, and then they burn these pictures, and think by so doing that they are passing all these things to their relations in the world of spirits. This is very ridiculous, or rather, pitiable. Nevertheless, these poor heathen Chinese teach us a lesson, to think and care more for the dead in Christ than we are wont to do.

We know very well that the dead do not want the things they had whilst alive, and so we think no more

about them. We put them out of mind when they are put out of sight. Now let us consider what the state of the dead who die in the Lord is.

The first thing we know of them is that "*they rest from their labours.*" All the work of life is over, there is no more of ploughing for the labourer, of sewing and darning and knitting for the house mother, no more of learning lessons for the child, no more of ministering to the flock of God for the priest. But they rest also from other labours. They rest from their work for the glory of God, of resisting temptation, of fighting the good fight of faith, of running the Christian race, of striving for the crown. They can do nothing more for themselves to advance their perfection. The work of probation is over. Their fate is decided.

The next thing we know is that "*Their works do follow them.*" What is meant by that? I will tell you.

Suppose that you grow up to be good, God-loving men and women, doing what you can for God, setting good examples; then, in time perhaps you may be married, and have little ones, and then you will teach to love and fear God; and at last you will die, and those whom you have trained to be good Christians will, in their turn, become fathers and mothers, and they will teach their children to walk in the same faith, and observe the same holy life, and so on and on pass from one generation to another your good teaching and good example,

producing a continuous harvest of good, and for all this you will receive reward—generation after generation will owe something to you. It is the same with teachers, it is the same with masters and mistresses, it is the same with everyone—all can advance God's glory, and do good in their generation: and the good they do will not die. It is seed sown: "Their works do follow them."

So it is with those who lead bad lives—drunken, swearing, dissolute, dishonest parents. The bad example they set their children makes the children grow up bad, and become in turn fathers and mothers of bad children again; and so of the wicked also, it is terribly true, "Their works do follow them."

Now there is something more I must tell you about the dead. Remember that we not only believe in a life of the *soul* after death, but we believe also in a resurrection of the *body* at the Last Day.

The dead in Christ rest from their labours, but are not made perfect till they wake up after Christ's likeness at the Last Day. Jesus Christ died on the cross, and His soul went to the place of departed spirits, but He did not attain to His perfect glory till He rose from the grave and went up into heaven; and He did not ascend into heaven *till after* the Resurrection. So we must not think or speak of the dead as having attained to their perfection, for they have not, and they will not, *till after* the Resurrection. They, like Christ, rest in the place

of departed spirits : they rest from their labours, they sleep in Christ, they are happy, but not yet made glorious.

At the Last Day the trumpet will sound, and then all shall be raised, soul and body re-united, no more thenceforth to be separated, but man, perfect in body and soul, will be made like unto Christ. Christ is in heaven, in His glorified man's body and human soul ; and He will never, never, cast His humanity aside. He will for all eternity be the God-Man ; and we, when we rise, if we be counted worthy to attain to the resurrection of eternal life, shall be in soul and body glorified, and live for ever and for ever in body and soul in the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

SERMON II.

THE PORCH.

I. *The Natural Rights of Man.*

ROM. XIII. 7.

"Render to all their dues."

WHEN you come into the Porch of the Church, my children, you see stuck up there a number of notices; and when the farmers come to Church, you see them stand and study these papers. What are they about?

They are about poor-rates, and school-rates, and way-rates; they are about the taxes that have to be paid, about the appointment of Churchwardens, and Waywardens, and Overseers of the Poor, and about the election of Members of Parliament—not things that you children care about, but things you will, probably, care about when you become old enough and are citizens.

These papers relate to duties, to burdens, which must be recognised and borne in a civilized community ; they belong to men as living orderly, disciplined lives as citizens ; savages do not have these things.

Now here, in the Church porch, is a capital place for me to talk to you about some of the elementary rights and duties of men, not as Christians, but as human beings, created by God. When we go inside the Church, I shall have to tell you about Christian verities, truths concerning Christians ; but before we come to these truths I should like to speak first of certain rights and duties which belong to us as men, whether Christian or heathen, which belong to us as creatures of God.

This year the French Republican Government has ordered that in all schools shall be hung up a table of the Rights of Man. They should have added to it another table of the Duties of Man.

Now, to-day, I am going to speak to you of certain rights which every man has whom God sends into the world. When we are born, we do not come without any rights. Not at all. God gives us all rights, and those who surround us are at once bound to recognise these rights ; our very presence in the world imposes duties on those about us.

The Rights of Man are twofold. 1. Those that are natural. 2. Those that are acquired. To-day I will speak

of the first set, the Natural Rights. These are three:—

- I. The Right to live.
- II. The Right of full development.
- III. The Right of a good name.

Now I will explain these to you.

I. In the first place every child who is born, has a right to live. God gave the child life, and whoever robs it of life, sins against its Creator. So, in Christian lands, the law extends its protection to the tiniest baby. No one can starve, or hurt, or kill any baby without becoming amenable to the law. But it was not always so.

Among the heathen in old times, parents were at perfect liberty to kill their children, if they did not want the trouble of rearing them. Among the ancient Greeks there was only one state in which parents were not allowed to destroy their children, and that was Thebes; there, when they did not care to rear the new-born babe, they took it to the magistrate, who sold it by auction to the highest bidder as a slave. In Sparta, parents took the children they did not desire to be burdened with to a horrible chasm in the earth, and flung the poor little creatures down into it. Generally, they put their babes in earthen pots, and left them exposed by the roadside, or in fields, to die of starvation.*

* Exposition of children was called "Chytrism," because of the earthen vessel used for the purpose.

It was the same among the Romans. Fathers killed their babes, and no one took them to task for it. Indeed one historian (Tacitus) says that it was a wonderful thing that the Jews and the Germans considered it a crime with them not to rear all their children; and the Emperor Augustus, in whose reign Christ was born, actually ordered his own grandchild to be exposed to death, when it was born. An early Christian writer (Tertullian) wrote about this custom thus, addressing the Roman people, "How many are there among you, and they, too, of the magistrates, who put an end to your children? You deprive them of the breath of life in water, or you suffer them to die of cold or hunger, or to be eaten by dogs."

It was the same elsewhere. In Iceland, fathers used to take their babes, if they did not want the trouble of them, or were worried with their screaming, and put them out in the snow to be frozen to death, and one of the first Christian converts in Iceland was a man called Thorkell Krafla, whose father had put him out to die. The day was cold. A man called Thorkell Mani was walking along the road when he heard the whimpering of the babe, so he went to it and he found that with its tiny hands the poor little creature had rumbled up the cloth which was over its face to muffle its screams. He took the child up in his arms, and he thought within himself: "God must have made these little wee fingers, and little feet and toes, so delicate and beautiful. He gave the child

life, and eyes, and ears—then surely it must be ill-pleasing to God for men to destroy His work ; and, on the other hand, He will bless those who save a little life.” So he took the child home, and called it by his own name, Thorkell, and it was also called Krafla, which means in Icelandic, “to ruffle up,” because the baby had pushed up the cloth over its mouth and nose to make its voice better heard—or so it seemed.

Now, children, think what a different state of things in Christian lands ! Life is now held sacred. No one may kill another. Life is protected by law. Every man has a right to live.

Nevertheless the right may be forfeited. If a man kills another, then he forfeits his life ; that is God’s law. Life is for life.

When God orders, “Thou shalt do no murder,” He shews that this Right of Life is given by Him.

11. The second Right of Man is the right to everything necessary to his full and perfect growth : that is, to food to nourish his body, education for his mind, and spiritual instruction for his soul. Man is made up of Body, Mind, and Soul ; and all three grow and must be fed. The food of the Body is bread and meat, and so forth. The food of the Mind is instruction in such things as enlarge the mind and train the understanding. The food of the Soul is spiritual instruction in the truths of the Faith and the laws of God.

Now in a Christian country this right is recognised. The law provides as well as it can, not very excellently, indeed in a somewhat clumsy way, that no one shall starve ; and the poor-rates are provided for the support of the bodies of the poor. Then again, by law all parents are bound to send their children to school—they may not starve the minds of their children any more than they may starve their bodies. Again, in most Christian lands the Church is established ; that is, the Government provides that there shall be Christian ministers to feed the souls of men.

Well, now, just as every child has a right to be fed, a right to be taught both reading, writing, and arithmetic, and also the truths that concern the soul, so is it a duty of parents to see that their children are not starved in mind or in soul any more than they are in body. And it is the duty of you children to try to profit by what you are taught, so that you may grow in wisdom and in knowledge, and in the love and fear of God, as you grow in stature. You are not likely to rob your bodies of food. You are ready enough for something to eat ; but are you hungry for instruction ? Do you feel any interest in your lessons ? And then—how about the soul ? Our Lord says, “ Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” He speaks a special blessing on those who have spiritual hunger ; that is, on those who are desirous to know the Truth, and to

know His Will, that they may believe the Faith, and keep His Commandment.

Our Lord once said that, unless people became "as little children," they could not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. What did He mean by this? Now the one most conspicuous feature in little children is their inquisitiveness—they want to know about everything; they are always asking questions. Our Lord meant, I believe, that unless people are eager and curious to know about the Truth, they will never come to the knowledge of the Faith—that the "I don't care" spirit is certain to shut them out from the Kingdom of Heaven.

III. The third Right of Man that comes to him by nature is the right to be respected—or the right of a good name. In the English laws no one is held to be guilty till proved guilty; and a prisoner is always given the benefit of a doubt. Every man has a right to be regarded as deserving of respect, and it is the duty of everyone to abstain from slander and backbiting, and anything that may injure the good name of another. God shows this when He commands, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour;" that is, you are bound, as a sacred obligation to God, to keep your tongue from saying anything venomous, unjust, untrue, cruel, and slanderous against another.

But—a person may forfeit his good name, as a person may forfeit his life. A person forfeits his good name

by doing whatsoever is dishonourable and dishonest. There is no sin in speaking of a wrong thing done by another, when we know it has been done. The sin of false witness is found when we speak that which we can not prove to be true against the good name of another.

In the First Commandment God requires that man shall acknowledge His existence; in the Third Commandment He requires that His Name shall be honoured; in the Sixth Commandment He requires that man's life shall be respected; and in the Ninth, that his good name shall not be hurt. What He demands for Himself, He demands also for man.

Now then you know the three natural Rights of Man, rights with which he comes into the world, rights which are now recognised in every Christian land.

1. The Right of Life.
2. The Right of Growth.
3. The Right of Respect.

And these, though acknowledged by the law, are of God's own giving. With these rights every human being is invested by Him.

SERMON III.

THE PORCH.

II. The Acquired Rights of Man.

ROMANS XIII. 7.

“Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.”

I TOLD you last Sunday about the Rights of Man; and I said that some Rights were natural and some were acquired. I spoke about the *Natural* Rights; and now I shall speak about the *Acquired* Rights.

Mind you—man has all these rights from God, and he who sins against these rights sins against God. The second set of rights belong to man as a member of a civilized society, the first set belong to him merely as an individual.

The Acquired Rights are—

- I. The Right of Property.
- II. The Right of Contract.
- III. The Right of Respect due to Position.

Now I will explain these to you.

I. The Right of Property means that every man has a right to hold as his own, and to freely use, temporal possessions, so far as he has received or acquired them without detriment to the rights of others, and without interference with his own duties to others.

You must understand that the Right of Property is the one great right which raises civilized men above savages.

Imagine the state of this island at a very early age, when the people who lived in it were mere savages. Sometimes when you are going over a new-ploughed field, or over a furzy down, you light upon little bits of flint shaped like arrow heads ; these were the weapons of the savage men who lived here. They killed hares and rabbits and birds with these flint arrows, and perhaps the only idea of property they had, was the idea that they had a right to eat those beasts they had killed. After a while, we do not know how and when, corn was introduced into the island, and then the savage men found that they could have bread if they grew corn in fields, and ground it to flour, and baked it. But it was of no use their sowing corn unless they had a right to the ground in which it was sown, so then they got hold of the idea that they

could call a field their own if they hedged it round and tilled it ; that land before having belonged to no one at all. Now see what an advance this was. If they had not thought of this they would have remained savages, hunting game till they had killed all the hares and rabbits in the island, and then they would have died of starvation. In North America there are now Indian tribes which are in this state, they have got no further than hunting for food, they have not got to tilling the land, and so they are fast dying out and disappearing. In another hundred years they will probably be gone altogether.

Well, then : the first idea of property a savage has, is the idea that he may call the rabbit his own which he has killed. Then, next, he gets the idea that he may call the land his own which he reclaims and tills. The hunter had no fixed house, had no villages or towns, he had to ramble about wherever he could find game ; but directly the savage began to till a field of corn, he built himself a house. Then some other savages said to him, "What is the good of your building four hedges round your field? Let us make our houses close together, and then one big long wall will do for all of us, to keep out the wild beasts from trampling down the corn."

So several of them settled together, and they hedged in all round them, and only marked off the divisions between their several fields. That was the beginning of villages and towns.

Thus you see how it was that the idea of property formed the very foundation of all civilization, and that is the reason why governments are so afraid of meddling with the rights of property, for to touch these rights is to throw down all the civilization of thousands of years.

There are three ways in which we may sin against the Right of Property: 1. By robbery; 2. By fraud; 3. By injury.

That is, we may take away from another that thing, or those things, which are his. This is called *stealing*. Or we may deprive a man of parts of his property, or hold back from him what is his by right; this is called *fraud*. Or we may injure what is his so as to reduce its value. Thus you may hurt trees growing on another man's land; or you may spill the ink over a book lent you; if it is accidental, you must ask pardon for it, and, if you can, make amends.

That which belongs to another you must not take away, withhold, or diminish.

God does not desire that men should be wild stupid savages, but be civilized beings, and so He has given His sanction to the Right of Property, in the Commandment, "Thou shalt not steal."

II. The second Acquired Right, is the Right of Contract; that is, the right to all such things as come to a

man through contract, by present, by exchange, or purchase, or lease.

For instance, you have a right to agree with a man to give him your work and time for so many hours a day, at a fixed wage.

Or, you may agree with a man for something that he has, as a house, or a field, or a horse, to take it for a certain fixed time; and at the end of that time return it to him unhurt.

Thus the second of the Acquired Rights is the basis of all commerce and trade.

At one time most dealings of one with another were by exchange, for money was very scarce. A man wanted a pair of boots, but he had several lambs, so he went to a shoemaker, and said to him, "Give me a pair of boots, and I will give you a lamb." I have a book, published in Iceland in 1756, on the title page of which is printed, "The cost of this book bound is 24 fishes."* And so boys at school barter their things to each other, because they are not very flush of money. In old times, also, farmers could not well pay rent in coin for their land, because money was scarce, so they paid it "in kind," that is, they gave so many days' work, they lent their horses and ploughs for so long to the landlord, they

* Nockrer marg-frooder Sögu-Thættur; Holum 1756, "Seliast Inbundner 24 Fiskum."

sent so many oxen and sheep and pigs and poultry to him in place of money. But this was very awkward, and led to much contention; accordingly, as money came into circulation, a farmer said—I value my team at ten shillings a day, and I will give the landlord ten shillings rather than have my horses taken off their work. Money is only the most convenient mode of exchange or barter. Everything is given a monetary value, and all payment is made now in money.

The sins against the Right of Contract consist in cheating the buyer or seller, giving short weight, damaged goods, passing bad coin, idling when paid for work, or delaying to pay wage, or giving insufficient wage. All cheating in trade contravenes, that is, goes against the Right of Contract.

III. Now we come to the third of the Acquired Rights. That is, the Right of Respect due to Station.

Parents have a right to demand reverence and honour from their children, and so, all who are put in authority by God, whether in Church or State, have a right to be treated with honour and respect. “The powers that be,” we are told, “are ordained of God.” Of the clergy we are told they are “God’s ministers.” S. Paul says, “Render to all their dues, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour is due.”

In this age there is a spirit abroad of resentment to this

Everyone says, "I am as good as another;" and he is disposed to refuse to give honour to those to whom honour is due. Yet all who are put in authority by God, father and mother in the house, and those who rule in the Church and the State, are put in their places by God, and exercise their authority by His sanction, and because they are set over us, therefore they have a right to our respect. God attached a blessing to the one Commandment which refers to this Right of Respect. "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." S. Peter says, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by Him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. *For so is the will of God.* As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the King." (1 Pet. ii. 13-17.)

Now I dare say you will think that I have given you a very dry talk to-day; but dry or not, it is useful for you to learn what I have tried to teach you about the Acquired Rights of men, and the duties that spring from them. To conclude, I will tell you an instance of respect shewn to the Rights of Property by a great prince. One of the most extensive and magnificent of the palaces in

the city of Rome is the Altieri palace. It was built about 1670, and is so large, that whole rows of houses, entire streets, and even palaces were pulled down, to make room for this vast habitation of the Altieri princes. All those whose houses were pulled down had sold their houses to the Altieri, and knowing well that the place they occupied was wanted, sold them for fancy prices. However, there was one poor old woman, who occupied a tiny cottage of only two rooms, which she would not sell for any price. The Altieri prince was so powerful that he might easily have forced her out of the house, and made her yield it up, but he would not do this. Instead, he built his vast palace over all this stretch of ground and folded one side of it round the little old cottage, so that it towered high in its marble splendour over it, and on all sides of it but one, where the old woman's little window and door looked out. The architect had to alter his plans to suit this arrangement, and to her dying day the old woman lived in her hovel, nestled in the splendid lap of a princely palace. If any of you go to Rome, look at the Altieri palace, and there you will see the old dame's cottage still cuddled in close to the grand entrance-gates by which the princes came into their palace from the square.

SERMON IV.

THE FONT.

I. The Spiritual Kingdom.

S. JOHN III. 6.

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh ; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

ON entering the Church, the first thing you see is the Font. The Font stands near the door to shew that admission to the Church of Christ is through Baptism. “Verily, verily, I say unto thee,” Christ said to Nicodemus, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh ; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” We have our Spiritual birth into Christ’s spiritual family by Baptism, as by nature we have our natural birth into the natural family.

There are in this world two kingdoms—the Natural Kingdom and the Spiritual Kingdom.

One day, the present Emperor of Germany was walking out in the road by himself, when he came on a number of little children going to school, with their satchels on their backs, or swinging in their hands. As he is very kind, and fond of children, he stopped and talked to them, and asked them questions to find out what they had learned in school, and how far their intelligences had been awakened to think and understand.

He stooped down and picked up a stone, and held it in his hand, and said, "Which of you can tell me to what kingdom this stone belongs?"

Then one little sharp boy answered, "To the Mineral Kingdom."

"Quite right," answered the Emperor, "Very good, my boy. Here is a copper for you, which also belongs to the Mineral Kingdom. Now you be quiet, and let me ask the others a question." Then he pulled an orange out of his pocket and asked, "To what kingdom does this fruit belong?"

Then another boy answered quickly, "To the Vegetable Kingdom."

"Well answered," said the Emperor, "You shall have the orange. Now, all of you, think, to what kingdom do you belong?"

The children were puzzled to know what to say—whether to the Kingdom of Prussia, or the Animal Kingdom, or what. Then all at once a tiny little girl, with rosy cheeks like apples, held up her hand, and said, “Please your majesty, I belong to the Kingdom of Heaven.”

Then the good old Emperor caught the little child up in his arms, and the tears came into his eyes, and he kissed the child, and took off his military helmet, and standing bareheaded in the morning sun, he said, “Right, and beautifully replied, dear little one. You and I also—I, though I am King of Prussia and Emperor of Germany—stand as lowly subjects under the King of kings and Lord of lords, in the blessed Kingdom of Heaven.”

I suppose you understand about the great divisions in the world to which the Emperor referred, and which the children knew something about.

All earth, and stones, and metals belong to the realm or Kingdom of Minerals.

All plants that grow, from the tiniest little lichen that creeps over the stones, to the oak and cedar of Lebanon, and all the flowers belong to the realm or Kingdom of Vegetables.

All living animals, insects, fishes, birds, and beasts, and men belong to the Animal Kingdom.

But then this last great realm is again divided. There

are the animals with instinct, from the smallest worm to the horse, and dog, and elephant ; and there are the animals with reason, which are men.

But then men are divided again into two kingdoms. There is the Natural Kingdom, and there is the Spiritual Kingdom. All men belong to the Natural Kingdom by virtue of their creation, only those belong to the Spiritual Kingdom who have been born into it, and the way by which we pass into the Spiritual Kingdom is Baptism. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." That which is born of the flesh, says Christ, is flesh,—that is, all men, born naturally, are natural, carnal men ; but that which is born of the Spirit is spirit—that is, those who are spiritually born, by Baptism, are spiritual men, members of the Spiritual Kingdom.

Now suppose a foreigner, let us say a Russian, wanted to enjoy the privileges of an Englishman ; to do so he must be, what is called, naturalized.

So if any man wants to enjoy the privileges of the Spiritual Kingdom, or, as it is often called, the Kingdom of Heaven, he must be naturalized into it. The way in which he is naturalized into it is Baptism.

Before he is baptized he has no rights in the Kingdom of Heaven ; after he is baptized he has all the rights, just as a Russian before he is naturalized has none of the

rights that belong to an Englishman, and, after he has been naturalized, becomes possessed of these rights.

I hope you all clearly understand this : that all mankind is made up of those who belong to the Natural Kingdom, and those who belong to the Spiritual Kingdom : and that the way by which natural men pass into the Spiritual Kingdom is Baptism.

So far so good. Next, I will tell you what the obligations are which are laid on all those who enter the Kingdom of the Spirit.

Do not suppose that those who are not baptized into the Spiritual Kingdom have no duties. Everything that has life has duties : the vegetables, the birds, the fishes, the beasts, all have duties, and they all perform them instinctively. So all men, from the basest savage up to the most cultivated heathen, have duties, because God has imposed duties on them, given them their places in the world, and the duties to fulfil which belong to the place each is in. I have told you that all men are given rights by God, and all men have duties to fulfil springing out of those rights. Thus heathen men as well as Christian men are bound to keep from murder, and from robbery, and from slander.

You will remember that God gave two tables of Commandments on Sinai ; the second are Commandments imposed on natural men. Spiritual men are not made free

from the laws that bind all men, but they have to keep Spiritual laws as well as natural laws, and, as I shall show you in my next talk to you, they enjoy spiritual graces as well as natural graces. If something more is expected of the spiritual men than of the natural men, it is because more is given to them.

In the Baptismal Service the promises are very plainly put which the child makes. But I think we may squeeze them into a still smaller space, and say that they amount to this :—

I. To Believe the Truth.

II. To Obey God's Will.

I. First, you undertake to believe all that God has revealed to the Church, which, as S. Paul says, is the Pillar and Ground of the Faith, and to which Christ promised that it should be guided into all truth by the ever indwelling Holy Spirit.

The Truth is contained in the most compact form in the Apostles' Creed. In that you have the sum and substance of all the Christian Faith. It is like a little packet of twelve kinds of seeds, which you are to sow in the garden of your soul, from which the loveliest flowers and the sweetest fruits of faith will spring up. So you must not keep the Creed like a packet of dry seeds put away on a shelf unsown. All the seeds are to be buried deep in your hearts, and to take root there and spring up.

II. Secondly, you undertake to obey God's Will, as it is revealed to you in the Bible; that is, to keep His Commandments,—to keep both tables,—to do your duty to man, and to do your duty to God. Do to others as ye would be done by. Respect all their rights, natural and acquired. Also defraud not God of His rights. He has rights as well as man, and His rights are, Love, Fear, Worship. I say, Love and Fear, which lead to obedience; we will do His Will if we love Him as a Father, or if we fear Him as a Judge and King. In the second table of Commandments God shows us what His Will is as to our behaviour to our fellow men, in the first table He shows us what our conduct is to be towards Him. He requires us to acknowledge Him, to reverence His Name, and His Day, and to give Him the worship due to Him as our Creator, our King, and our God.

SERMON V.

THE FONT.

II. Spiritual Graces.

ROM. V. 2.

“This Grace wherein we stand.”

I SPOKE to you last Sunday about the two Kingdoms to which men belong: the Natural Kingdom, and the Spiritual Kingdom. Now, to-day, I am going to speak to you about God's Grace, which is given to all men, but not to all men alike.

God gives to all men Grace, that is, Divine enlightenment and help, to enable every man to see and do those duties which belong to his position in the world. The animal has an instinct which tells it what is right and what is wrong for it. So man is given a directing conscience to guide him; but conscience is not a *thing* in him like brain

or heart. nor is it a faculty of the brain, or heart ; it is God's Grace guiding and enlightening his mind or affections, so that very often heathens do what is right, are honest, and truthful, and faithful, and patient, because something tells them in their souls that it is *right* to be so, and *wrong* to be dishonest, and lying, and treacherous, and discontented.

Grace is Natural or Supernatural.

Those who live in the Natural Kingdom are given by God *Natural Grace*, those who live in the Spiritual Kingdom are given *Supernatural Grace*. We use the word GRACE very often, but we do not attach much meaning to it. I want you much to know what it means. Grace means God's light and help given to man to enable him to see and to do those things which God would have him do.

Bear this explanation well in mind, and then you will understand what follows.

You know that Adam and Eve gave way to temptation and sinned against God. This is called the Fall of Man, and since the Fall all mankind have been affected by it.

God made all men to be happy eternally, and there is but one way by which they can be happy. That way is by keeping God's Will. But through the Fall of Man

(a) Man's *knowledge* became darkened, so that men did not *know* what God's Will was.

(b) Man's *inclinations* became twisted, so that men *inclined* to what was evil, instead of what was good.

(c) Man's *will* was weakened, so that men had not strength of purpose to avoid the evil and do the good even when they knew what was right.

God gives Grace to help man under this condition of ignorance and infirmity. He gives him intelligence to see, if he will only look about him, and think what is right, and He sets in his heart a love of what is really good, and He stirs up his will to make him wish to escape from slavery and what is evil. Heathen men as well as Christian men have this Grace from God, which we call Natural, because it is given to all men to help them to know and fulfil the natural duties of life. So do not think that poor heathen men are shut out from God's care and love and assistance ; far, far from it ! He thinks of them all, and helps them all. But then we Christians who are in the Church, which is the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Spiritual Kingdom, have more enlightenment and more help. The further light and help given us goes by the name of SUPERNATURAL GRACE. We know very well our weakness, and how hard it is to do that which we know is God's Will. We could not do it without God's Grace, because by the Fall our natures are so infirm. The Apostles asked Christ, "Who then can be saved?" And He answered, "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." (S. Matt. xix. 25, 26.)

S. Paul says, "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." (Phil. ii. 13.) And again, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything"—that is, anything good—"as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." (2 Cor. iii. 5.) And our Lord Jesus said, "He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without Me ye can do nothing." (S. John xv. 5.)

Let me try to explain to you by an illustration what Grace does for us.

You know, I dare say, a little foot-bridge over a river. It is a plank or a pole thrown across from bank to bank, on which you may walk across above the water. I dare say if the river is swollen, and deep, if there be only a narrow plank or pole you will shrink, and say, "O! this is dangerous! I wish there were something to hold by." Generally in such foot-bridges there is not only the plank on which to walk, but there is also the rail to which to hold. The rail without the plank is no good at all, and the plank without the rail is insufficient.

Now we have a dangerous course to go through life—it is something like passing over a deep and rolling river, and there is great danger that we may perish in it and lose our souls. So God has shown us His Will, which is the plank; and He has given us His help, which is the rail; so that by walking along the path of His Commandments we may be stayed up by holding fast to His Grace.

S. Paul says that under the Law, that is, in the time of the Jewish Dispensation, God showed what was His Will; but with this showing of that came "the knowledge of sin," that is, the giddiness and fear of falling in walking along the plank of His Law. There was no help—no hand-rail—only the plain, straight plank. This was terrible: God's wrath against sinners was a boiling, threatening torrent below, and straight over it ran the narrow way of God's Law. No wonder men turned back! No wonder men became giddy, lost their footing, and fell in!

But now we are not under the Law, but under Grace; that is, we have not to walk along the plank without a hand-rail—we have God's help, His Grace, to stay us up and keep us steady whilst we go on, foot before foot, step on step, along the way that leads to Eternal Happiness.

So God *shows* you His Will, and *helps* you to do His Will. Can we then do God's Will here fully? Yes, we can, through His help. "I can do all things," says S. Paul, "through Christ which strengtheneth me."

God gives to all men sufficient grace to help them to fulfil His Will. God desires the salvation of all men. So first He revealed by Moses what His Will was, by means of which man could be saved; then when men found that they were unable to keep steady on the path of His Commandments without help, He gave His Grace to steady them. Those who are unbaptized, those in the

Natural Kingdom, are trying to get across without the rail of Supernatural Grace, and so they have far less chance than you who are baptized, and have laid hold of the rail.

In the Old Testament God declared that He desired the salvation of men. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." (Ezek. xxxiii. 11.) And S. Paul says, "God our Saviour will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. ii. 3, 4.) And that He gives Grace sufficient for salvation, S. Paul says elsewhere, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man : but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able ; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1 Cor. x. 13.) And he exhorts, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." (Phil. ii. 12, 13.)

The story is told of the peasant poet, John Clare, that when he was a little boy he ran away from home to try to reach the horizon, and find the place where Heaven and earth meet. But, really, Heaven and earth meet all about us—not only the visible sky, but the Spiritual Heaven as well. God is everywhere present, everywhere enlightening, guiding and helping ; and if we are in darkness and error and fall, the fault lies with us, who will not lay hold of His Grace and open our eyes to His truth.

I have now told you what Grace is :—that it is God's light and help given to us to enable us to do those things which He wills us to do.

It is, however, possible for us to frustrate God's Grace, and to fall from Grace.

To frustrate means to make of no effect. We can make God's Grace of no effect to us, if we set ourselves wilfully to oppose it. I will tell you a very terrible story.

Some years ago there was a series of murders committed by a young man, in Yorkshire, with a revolver. He had made up his mind to commit murder some time before, and he used to go out in the evening and practise with his pistol at a piece of paper he had stuck against a rock, so as to become certain of his aim. I must tell you that this young man had been religiously brought up, and perfectly knew right from wrong. Moreover, he had many stings of conscience whilst thus engaged practising. At last one evening he felt as though God were speaking to his soul, and warning him that if he fired another shot He would withdraw His Grace wholly from him. The young man stood some time trembling, with the pistol shaking in his hand. At last he nerved himself, and deliberately, knowing the consequences, fired at the bit of paper, and hit it. After that he never felt the least ache of conscience—his conscience was dead. God's Spirit will not always strive with man, and it had ceased to strive with him when he wilfully

went against it. I was told this by a clergyman who visited him before his execution, and who had known him from boyhood, and had prepared him, if I remember right, for Confirmation. He urged him very earnestly, and with anguish of soul, to repent, but the young man answered always, "*I can* not. I know that what you say is true ; I know I shall be lost eternally ; I know that I sinned against Grace and light : but *I can not* repent now—the power to do so has gone from me. I must die in my sin."

And he was hung, I believe, unrepentant to the last. This is, indeed, a fearful story. I tell it you to show you how that if we go on sinning against Grace, at last a time comes when conscience becomes quite dead, and ceases to reproach us.

It was so with Pharaoh. God gave him warning after warning, and the warnings at last only hardened his heart.

A tender conscience is a very blessed possession, for it means a conscience always listening for the voice of God.

My children, you should try to have a tender conscience, so as to hear God speak ; you should also have a prayerful spirit, asking God not only to tell you what is right, but also to help you to do what is right.

SERMON VI.

THE FONT.

III. Preventing and Sanctifying Grace.

■ COR. XII. 9.

“My Grace is sufficient for thee.”

I SPOKE to you the Sunday before last on the Spiritual Kingdom, into which you entered when you were baptized. Last Sunday I spoke to you about God's Grace, given to all men, Natural Grace given to every man born into the world, and Supernatural Grace given to those who are in the Kingdom of Heaven, the Church.

To-day, I am going to speak to you about the two effects of Grace: Grace that wakens, and Grace that sanctifies, or Preventing Grace and Sanctifying Grace.

We ask in the Collect, “Lord, we pray Thee that Thy Grace may always *prevent* and *follow* us, and make

us continually to be given to all good works." Here we ask for the two kinds of Grace, that which goes before (prevent means "to go before"), and that which comes after and perfects what was begun by Preventing Grace. So S. Paul prays that God who had begun a good work in his Philippian converts would perform, that is, complete it, until the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. i. 6.)

It is a very simple truth that I am trying to teach you. It is this—God's Grace begins our spiritual life, and continues to nourish it, just as oil is poured into a lamp before it will begin to burn, and oil must be continually supplied to it, if it is to go on burning; or as water must be given to a plant to start its growth, and water must be given to it continuously if it is to continue to grow, and put forth flowers, and be tall and beautiful.

So God starts the spiritual growth in you with His Grace, and He continues to nourish the spiritual growth He began.

So God kindles the flame of the Divine life in you, and He continues to feed it with His Grace that it may go on burning.

Preventing Grace is a hard word, but its meaning is very simple. Pre-venting means, as I said, going-before. Preventing Grace means Grace that goes before, and begins the Christian, spiritual life. And Sanctifying, or assisting, or justifying Grace, is the Grace that follows after and finishes the work begun.

I should not have tried to impress this on you so distinctly but that there is a difference in the way in which Preventing Grace and Sanctifying Grace are given.

Preventing Grace is a free gift of God. Sanctifying Grace must be asked for and sought of God.

When S. Paul says, "By Grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God" (Eph. ii. 8), he is speaking of Preventing Grace. It was through this free gift of God's Grace that S. Paul was converted when he was on his way to Damascus to persecute the Church. So every child who is baptized is given the Preventing Grace of God freely. It has done nothing to deserve it. It has not even asked for it. It does not even know what it means. That Baptismal Grace which transforms the child from a child of the world into a child of God, from a natural man into a spiritual man, is given by God out of His abundant mercy, and is perfectly free.

God's Preventing Grace acts also on those who have been baptized, and who have become careless, indifferent, and sinful. Then it wakens them up, converts them—that is, it rouses them up to see that they are going wrong, doing wrong, and near destruction.

In the collect for the last Sunday in Trinity, we pray that God will stir up the wills of His faithful people, that they may plenteously bring forth the fruit of good works. And, indeed, we do want rousing every now and then,

and being urged on to do God's work, and to run in the race set before us. We are so much inclined to go on in a careless, easy, thoughtless manner, taking all as a matter of course, and allowing every day a little more of the things of this world to occupy our attention, and a little more to displace the thoughts of the things of the Spirit, that at last we are like those who have fallen asleep. We are asleep to spiritual things. Then we want rousing.

I have a house which is covered with slate against the south west, which is a rainy quarter. A plant of ivy grew against the wall, but it was not particularly noticed, and it was allowed to spread, and it grew up over the whole side of the house. It thrust its little tendrils under the slates, tendrils no thicker than threads, but these grew and put out leaves, and became thick branches, and snapped the slates, and one day down came all the slates off the side of the house. So it is with the pleasures, and cares, and business of this life. We allow them to creep up and on, and at last they cover and destroy all our spiritual armour, and leave us exposed to the shafts of the devil.

I had a horse which would go to sleep whilst trotting; he jogged on, and at last he tripped against a little stone, and down he went, and cut his knees badly. He did this more than once; and I found that it all came from the horse becoming careless, and going to sleep whilst trotting on. So now, when that horse is driven, he is touched up with the whip continually, to keep him awake,

and now he never falls, for he is never allowed to go off into a dream.

We want to be kept always watchful and wakeful, not to allow the love of the world to cover us and rob us of our Christian armour, and not to allow ourselves to become thoughtless and forgetful of our duties, and drop into a spiritual sleep.

This is why we ask that the wills of God's faithful may be stirred up, kept on the alert. And so we want God's waking, reviving, Preventing Grace all our days.

But then, we want something more than that, we want God's helping, Sanctifying Grace, "that we, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of God be plenteously rewarded."

God gives us His rousing, Preventing Grace freely, but He requires us to ask and seek for His Sanctifying Grace. He gives to all men liberally, if they will ask (S. James i. 5), but He will not give unasked.

Again, His grace must be sought in His Sacraments, which are means or channels of Grace.

Lastly, His Grace must be used.

If we are to become holy and be well pleasing to God, we must live a life of Grace, but we can only do so if we ask Him to give us Grace, and so are prayerful, and if we seek it where it may be found, by frequenting the Sacraments, and use it when we have got it.

You will recall the parable of the talents. A man going into a far country calls his servants together, and gives to one five talents, to another two, to a third one. "Then he that had received the five talents, went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one, went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money." You will remember how the two first were commended, and the last was rebuked.

There was a story I read when I was a boy called "Eyes and No-eyes." It concerned two lads who went out a walk one day. When they came home they were asked what they had seen. One answered, "Nothing at all." But the second had seen a number of things. He had seen the rooks building their nests, weaving the sticks in and out together. He had seen a squirrel up a pine, busy picking off the bark and throwing it down. He had seen a woodpecker running up an oak, tapping at the bark, to find where a worm was hidden. He had seen a mole burrowing in a field; and shrewmice under a hedge. He had found a scarlet "Jews' ear" among some dead sticks, and a white hyacinth; and in the pond a lot of frog spawn. He had seen the little crimson flowers bursting on the larch, which children call "strawberry baskets"; and he had found a butterfly just creeping out of its case, in which it had lain as dead.

"Eyes" had seen and taken interest in a thousand

things all along his way as he walked ; but "No-eyes" had seen nothing of interest at all. That is, one boy had used his talent of sight, and the other had not used it.

So is it with Grace, to enable us to see and to help us to walk, in the Spiritual Kingdom. God gives us Grace, but we must use it ; and if we use it, He will give us more Grace.

I have seen, side by side, two plots of allotment garden ground. One industrious man raised on his plot potatoes, and cabbages, and cauliflowers, and beans,—enough to keep his family supplied with vegetables. The next piece was neglected, and grew only thistles and sting-nettles, to the great annoyance of those who had the adjoining plots. So when this had gone on some time, the neglectful man had his plot taken from him and given to another.

It is so with all that God gives us, our talents, our faculties in the Natural Kingdom, and Grace in the Spiritual Kingdom. We must use, and use well, what is given to us.

S. Paul says that he is thankful to say God's Grace was not given to him in vain, for he laboured more abundantly than many others, to profit by the Grace he had received.

Do you remember the story of the lad, "Hans in luck," who, after having served his master seven years, was

given as his wage a piece of silver as big as his head? He went away, carrying it, along the road, and found it very heavy. Presently a man rode by on a capital horse. "Ah!" said Hans aloud, "what a fine thing to ride a horse, instead of to be weighed down under a load of silver." When the rider heard that, he drew rein, and asked Hans if he would exchange the lump of silver for the horse. The lad agreed, gave up the metal, and mounted the saddle. But Hans did not understand how to sit a horse, and he was soon after thrown, near where a man was tending a cow. Then, disgusted with his horse, he exchanged the horse for the cow. After a while he grew tired of driving the cow, and exchanged her for a pig. Then he changed the pig for a goose, and then the goose for a grinding stone, which, when he was stooping at a pond to drink, rolled into the water, and was lost. Thus he had foolishly wasted all the wages he had received.

On the other hand, you can see in the world many successful men, who have begun with very little—perhaps a half-crown in the pocket—and have gone on working and gaining, and adding to their store, till at last they become very wealthy.

It is much the same in the Spiritual Kingdom, there are some who squander away the Grace that is given to them, till all is lost; and there are others who use what little they have and get more, and go on profiting by it,

till they become very saints, and will shine gloriously in Heaven at the Resurrection, when many that were first shall be last, because they wasted, and the last shall be first, because they *used*, the Grace that had been given them.

SERMON VII.

NAVE AND AISLES.

Holiness, I. Truthfulness.

LEVIT. XI. 44.

"I am the Lord your God : ye shall therefore be holy ; for I am holy."

Do you notice how that the body of the Church is made up of three parts, divided by pillars and arches? This is not indeed the case with all Churches, but it is with most. In some small and poor parishes the builders could not afford to complete the Churches with all the parts at once, and they left them to be enlarged in after times ; but as a general rule you will find that the body of the Church, in which the people sit, is divided into three, and that these three parts make up but one Church. In Cathedrals and in some large Churches the two side parts, or Aisles, are carried all the way to the end, and where the

East End is rounded are carried right round behind the Altar.

The middle part, in which the congregation sit, is called the Nave, and the wings on each side are called Aisles.

In many of our Cathedrals also there are to be found three Towers, one at the end of each Aisle, and one in the middle, where the Nave passes into the Chancel. At Lichfield there are three Spires, at Canterbury and York three Towers. And many East Windows are made up of three lights.

Now I am going to teach you something to-day which I found on this threefold division of our Churches into Nave and Side Aisles. You see that these divisions do not make up three separate Churches, but unite in the one Church.

Well—just as Nave and Side Aisles make up one Church, and as three lights combine to make one window, so are there three great qualities, or attributes, which combine to make up Holiness.

“Holiness becometh Thy House for ever,” said David, and perhaps one reason which moved the old builders to make a threefold partition of the Church was to show to those who entered what were the three great virtues which go to make up Holiness.

Our Lord said, “Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.” (S. Matt. v. 48.) “This

is the Will of God," says S. Paul, "even your sanctification." (1 Thess. iv. 3.) He bade, "Have your fruit unto Holiness," (Rom. vi. 22), and "Perfect Holiness in the fear of God." (2 Cor. vii. 1.) "Stablish your hearts unblameable in Holiness." (1 Thess. iii. 13.) And he declared that without Holiness we cannot see the Lord. (Heb. xii. 14.)

We speak of Christ's Kingdom on earth as the *Holy* Catholic Church, because all the members are called to Holiness, and all the Sacraments are ordained as means to hallow, and all the sermons are for the purpose of inducing men to be holy, and all the prayers are for sanctification.

I have spoken to you about the Spiritual Kingdom to which we belong, and of God's Grace, which is given to us in that Kingdom, to enable us to live not after the flesh, to mind carnal things, but after the Spirit, to mind Heavenly things. God gives us His Grace to sanctify us, that is, to make us holy, and so both S. Paul and S. Peter speak of our sanctification through the Spirit (2 Thess. ii. 13; 1 Pet. i. 2): so now it is most fitting that I should go on directly to teach you what are the main qualities of Holiness. In the rainbow are really only three primary colours, red, yellow, and blue, but the red overlaps the yellow and makes orange, and the yellow fades into the blue and makes green, and the blue unites with the red to make violet. These three colours, orange, green, and

violet, are called secondary colours, because they are made up out of the others mixed together, but really, in the rainbow, there are only three quite distinct colours. So in Holiness there are many virtues, but they all come of three great primary virtues, which are found in God, and which we must try to have in ourselves, if we will be like God, perfect, as our Father which is in Heaven is perfect.

These three virtues are, 1, Truth ; 2, Faithfulness ; 3, Justice ; or, as it is otherwise called, Righteousness.

Let us take the South Aisle to represent Truth, then the Central Nave is Righteousness, and the North Aisle, which has a certain likeness to the South, is Faithfulness. I have seen in the Vosges mountains a chapel, called in German, "Drei Aehren," which means, three ears of corn. In it stands a statue holding a wheat stalk with three golden ears growing on the same stalk. There is a story told that in old times the wild and barbarous people in these mountains did not know the use of corn, at least, not of wheat ; and that one day a heavenly apparition was seen on the mountain side holding in the hand a stalk with three wheat ears on it, which the wild people received, and sowed, and thence spread the wheat they now cultivate. Truth, Righteousness and Faithfulness are three golden ears that contain many precious grains, from which the harvest of Holiness may be reaped.

I have seen in Franconia a rock, out of which three

springs of crystal water rush, side by side, and after flowing a little space apart, they unite to make one river. The people thereabout greatly respect these three springs that make one river, and there is a magnificent Church built on the top of the rock dedicated to the Holy Trinity, because they see in the three fountains that make one stream, a figure of the Three in One and One in Three. But it is also a figure of the three parts that go to make up Holiness.

We will begin with Truth.

Perhaps you have noticed how repeatedly the writers in the Holy Scriptures insist on the Truth of God, on the perfect reliance, therefore, that can be placed on God's Word, because He cannot lie. He is, as S. John says, the Truth. "We know Him that is true: and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ." (1 John v. 20.) And he speaks of Christ as the only-begotten, full of grace and truth. Grace and truth, he adds, came by Jesus Christ. "I am the way, the truth, and the life," said Christ Himself. But I need not quote to you texts which speak of God as true. You know by the witness of your own consciences that God is truth. It is because God is true that we must strive to be also truthful. To tell lies and be deceitful is a temptation of our fallen nature, and arises from cowardice. We are afraid of the consequences of speaking the truth. Among savages, and the basest of men who are little above brutes, truth

is not to be found, they are liars. But among the higher races of men there is respect and love for the truth, it is felt that there is something noble and manly in truth, and something mean and despicable in falsehood. Indeed, we can generally tell a child's quality pretty well by its value for truth. It is the barometer which tells how its nature stands, high or low. A child who is naturally deceitful, shifty, and false, is a very low and mean-natured child, and you know it will not rise to much that is good in the world; on the other hand, a straightforward, transparent, truthful child, you are sure, will do well wherever it goes. All will love and respect such an one.

We must try to be like God, by being true as He is true; we must be resolved with all the strength of our wills to hold to the truth in all our sayings and doings to others, and in all our sayings about others.

We must be careful to assert nothing of which we are not sure that it is true, nor agree with others in what we do not regard as true.

Solomon says that "Lying lips are abomination to the Lord." (Prov. xii. 22.) "These six things doth the Lord hate," he says, "yea, seven are an abomination unto Him: A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." (Prov. vi. 16-19.) Among these

seven things that are an abomination to God, three are sins of untruthfulness, direct lies, false witness, and a mischief-making tongue that stirs up strife.

In the very last chapter in the Bible, in which we are told who will be shut out from Heaven, six classes of evil-doers are enumerated, and one of these comprises him who "loveth and maketh a lie." (Rev. xxii. 15.)

There are several ways in which we may sin against truth, without telling deliberate lies.

1. By dissimulation, making a thing appear other than it is.
2. By hypocrisy, pretending to be other than we are.
3. By flattery, making people believe themselves other than they are.

Fortunately, children are not much given to flattering one another, and their natural good sense tells them to regard those as humbugs who try to flatter them. Also they are not often hypocrites, it takes some practice to be able to act a part, but they are often guilty of dissimulation in trying to make things appear different from what they are, by giving evasive and false excuses for their conduct, by getting others to do their lessons for them and passing them off as their own.

Lying is a real evil. It comes of the Devil. It is as opposed to truth as light is to darkness. Our Lord

tells us that the Devil is a liar, and the father of lies. Solomon assures us that "a poor man is better than a liar" (Prov. xix. 22); he means that it is far better to suffer poverty than to get riches by falsehood.

The liar seeks to deceive another either in order thereby the better to reach his own end, or that he may hurt the other. Consequently lying springs from want of respect to the manly dignity and rights of another, and also want of respect to God, who invested man with that dignity and those rights.

Again, lying makes the liar utterly unlike God, and like the Devil. Those who are the children of God must "speak every man truth with his neighbour." Those who lie, are doing the work of the Devil. The liar misuses his knowledge for the purpose of sowing falsehood, he disguises the truth instead of making it clear to the eyes of others.

If, then, truthfulness is so holy, and lying so sinful, it behoves us to be very careful in our talk, and not to speak first and think afterwards, but to think first and then speak. Half the lies that are uttered slip off the tongue unconsidered, the word is out of our mouths before we have weighed whether it is true. So a lesson I wish you to take home with you from what I have said to you to-day is to be careful what you speak.

The Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of truth, and when

He leads, He leads into all truth. If you then who are in the Spiritual Kingdom are walking in the Spirit, led by the Spirit, then you will be led to love the truth, to speak the truth, and to shrink from all dissimulation, deception, disingenuousness, and lies.

SERMON VIII.

NAVE AND AISLES.

Holiness, II. Righteousness.

PSALM XIV. 5.

"God is in the generation of the righteous."

I TOLD you last Sunday that as three colours, red, blue, and yellow, go to make up the rainbow, and as Nave and two Aisles make up the body of the Church, so do Truth, Righteousness, and Faithfulness go to make up Holiness. I spoke to you last Sunday about Truth. Now I am going to speak about Righteousness, or Justice.

I will begin with a story.

There was once upon a time a man who had some land near Rome; he had a great friend, who was called Ponticus, a knight of influence and fortune, and skilled in law. Indeed he was a solicitor. Ponticus often said

to his friend, "My dear fellow, whenever you want help in any little vexation, particularly in law matters, command my services, I will do all in my power to assist you."

Well—one day the gentleman came to Sir Ponticus, and said, "I really do want your help now. I am in a sad predicament. A neighbour has appropriated some of my best water-meadows, where I have got my finest crops of hay. The meadows were bought by my great grandfather, and this neighbour has no right whatever to them." "O!" said Ponticus, "we'll soon settle that. I'll take all the trouble off your hands. I'll send out ■ summons to —— what is the man's name?" "Balbus," answered the gentleman. "Balbus!" exclaimed the lawyer. "O! Balbus!—that enormously wealthy man who owns so many hundreds of thousands of acres, and lives in such splendour? No—no—my friend, I dare not meddle in the matter against one so powerful and so wealthy."

Some time after this, the gentleman came again to Ponticus. "Well!" said the latter, cheerfully, "How goes the world with you now?" "Not very well," answered the other. "I have some annoyance with a man who is blocking up a road from my farm. He is making a wall round his garden, and has stopped up my road, so that we cannot get to my farm at all now with carts." "O! is that all," exclaimed Ponticus, and he caught

up his pen, "I will write for you, and order him immediately to pull down his wall, under threat of prosecution. What is his name?" "Licinius." "Licinius!" exclaimed Ponticus, and put down the pen. "He is the most popular man in Rome, so popular that he is certain to be elected Consul, and to rise to great power. My dear friend, we must not meddle with him, or he will bring all Rome down on us. Bear the inconvenience, is my advice, and if you insist on prosecuting him, go to some one else to help you. I decline to meddle."

Some time after, the gentleman came to the office of Ponticus again. "Well," said the latter, "any trouble now? If so, I am the man to assist you." "Yes," replied the gentleman, "I am much annoyed by a fellow who lets his cattle stray over my pastures. Yesterday his sheep got into my garden, and ate every scrap of greens in it." "Have the beasts pounded," said Ponticus, "and sue the man for damages. Who is he?" "Only a slave, who has been set free, and given a little farm." "So much the better. What is his name?" asked the lawyer. "He is called Parmenas." "Parmenas!" exclaimed Ponticus, and leaned back in his chair. "You do not surely mean the favourite old servant of the Emperor, to whom he gave his liberty and a handsome reward the other day?" "Yes, I do." "My good friend," said Ponticus, "I cannot help you now. I dare not do so. The Emperor would not like to have his trusty old

servant prosecuted; and I should get into disgrace at court."

After some months, the gentleman again appeared at the lawyer's office. "Well," said Ponticus, "what can I do for you, to-day? I am at your service, body and soul; you may command my time, my talents, my influence, and my purse." "Sir!" said the gentleman, "I have asked your help already several times in vain. First because Balbus was too rich, then because Licinius was too popular, then because Parmenas was an Emperor's servant, now I ask you to help me against a really insignificant person, an old woman, a widow. She has got hold of a pet dog of mine, which she enticed into her house, and she keeps it there and will not return it to me, but I am fond of my dog, and I want it back." "That is easily managed. I will write a warrant out for you at once. What is her name?" "Lavonia." "Lavonia!" cried Ponticus, and pushed away the paper on which he had begun to write, "Why she is my cousin once removed. She is a widow with a nice little fortune, and has no heirs. I trust she will leave me something in her will. No! I must not meddle in this matter, or she will strike me out of her will."

After that the gentleman never went near Ponticus. The lawyer was not a just man. He was big in promises, but he would do nothing for his friend which was in the smallest way likely to hurt himself.

I have told you this story to introduce to you the subject of Justice, or Righteousness. Justice and Righteousness mean the same thing, and in the Epistles of S. Paul, in many of the places where we read Righteousness it ought to have been translated Justice, to be more clearly understood. However both mean really the same thing. Justice means the giving to every man that which is his due ; and Righteousness means doing right to all, giving God His rights, and our neighbours their rights. We speak of the Lord as our Righteousness, because He helps us by His Supernatural Grace to do what is right and just to everyone. God deals righteously to us, giving us our rights, and He expects us to deal righteously with every man with whom we are brought in contact, by giving them their rights. What these rights are you know, for I have explained them to you. God is very unlike the man I told you of, "He is no respecter of persons," and we must also do right by all, be true and just in all our dealings, without respect of persons, and at whatever cost to ourselves.

There is nothing you children dislike more than unfairness, and unfairness is only another word for injustice. There is nothing against which the consciences of men revolt more indignantly than against injustice.

Among the heathen there were just men, who tried as far as their light went to deal fairly with all ; good kings and rulers who tried to govern righteously, but the

whole law of righteousness they did not know, and so could not keep it. Moreover, unassisted with God's Supernatural Grace, they could not be altogether righteous. Their ignorance and their weakness stood in the way. S. Paul, speaking of the state of the heathen before they were admitted into the Kingdom of Grace, says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." By washing of regeneration he means, of course, Baptism, and by renewing of the Holy Ghost he means Confirmation. Men unassisted by Divine Grace are unable, and unlightened by Divine knowledge, are too ignorant, to be righteous, but in Christ's Church all the necessary knowledge is given us, as well as the necessary help.

Of course we are still liable to error, and so through error we may sometimes judge wrongly; but there is no sin in involuntary error; we must try to be as just and fair as we can.

I have told you about the Rights of Men; what their claims are on you, you now know. Righteousness, or Justice, consists, in part, in the observance of these rights. I say, *in part*; because not only have men their rights, but God also has His rights, and if we are to be righteous, we shall be righteous (or just) towards God as well as towards men.

I will not say any more to you now about righteous-

ness towards men, but about righteousness towards God.

God's rights are—

1. Love, due to Him as Father and Creator.
2. Fear, due to Him as a righteous Judge.
3. Worship, due to Him as King and God.

We must love God, because He loves us, and because He made us, and sustains us ; because He gave His Son to die for us ; and because He gives His Holy Spirit to sanctify us. We must fear Him because we know our own unworthiness, and His justice. Now out of Love and Fear come Obedience. If we love God, we shall obey Him, and if we fear Him we shall obey Him, so, I might have said that God has two rights, Obedience and Worship, but to go quite to the root of the matter it is from Love or Fear that Obedience springs, and so, I say that God exacts of us all three things, Love, Fear, and Worship. I will only say a few words to you now on Worship. God has set apart one day in seven not to be spent in idleness, but as a day on which He is to be worshipped. He makes it a day of rest from worldly labours *in order* that there may be nothing to hinder you from coming to His courts, and offering Him thanks and praise. A great many people keep Sunday as a day of rest, but do not make it a day of worship. That is, they are unrighteous towards God, they defraud Him of what He demands. Pray remember that just as you are bound to

do your duty to men, so you are bound to do your duty to God. As you are bound to give men their rights, so are you bound to give God His rights—and one of these rights is Worship.

What would you say of a man who thought he did that which was right if he did not murder another man, nor slander his good name, but who stole his goods? You would say he observed some of his duties, but not all. So he who deals honestly by men, but robs God of the honour due to His Name, observes some of his duties, but not all. You are as much bound to give God worship on His day, as you are bound to keep from picking and stealing, and slandering, and murder.

I have been sometimes struck with the difference between Christian people in the South of Europe, Italians and Spaniards, and Christian people in England. Many foreign people are very particular to give God His due, but they are not so particular about giving man his due. You may have heard of people who have gone to Church on Sunday, and stolen or committed murder after it. We think this very shocking, and so it is. But we think it so very shocking because it *affects ourselves*. We do not like to have people careless about their duty to our own throats and pockets. In England we are very particular to give man his due, we do not murder, nor steal of men, but we steal of God, and think nothing of that, because it does not touch ourselves.

Foreigners are often shocked at English people for their impiety, as they call it, in being so careless about giving God the worship that is His by right—and I am not sure that it is not equally unrighteous to withhold worship from God on His day as it is to steal the coppers that belong to a neighbour. God puts the duties to Himself first, and after, those to man. We think of the duties we owe to man, and think nothing at all of the duties we owe to God. Till we give God what is His due, as well as try to give to man what is his right, we shall not be just and righteous.

SERMON IX.

NAVE AND AISLES.

Holiness, III. Faithfulness.

REV. II. 10.

“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”

INTO almost whatsoever house you enter nowadays, you will find in it some Japanese ornament, either some porcelain, or lacquered trays, or cabinets, or fans, even toys. The name of Japan is very familiar to us.

Whenever I hear or read the Psalm cxiii. my mind reverts at once to the far off islands of Japan. Do you wonder why? When I have told you, I think it will be the same with you. The singing of the Psalm, “Praise the Lord, ye servants: O praise the Name of the Lord,” will bring up before your minds a scene in Japan.

In the year 1549, S. Francis Xavier landed in Japan

and tried to found there a Christian Church. He failed, but other Missionaries followed, and had better success; and so mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed, that in fifty years the number of converts amounted to many thousands. Suddenly, in 1597, the Emperor began to persecute the Church, and the first martyrs numbered twenty-six. Of these, some were children,—boys. They were condemned to be crucified, one boy named Louis was aged twelve, another, Anthony, was thirteen, a third, Thomas, was fourteen. Every one of these poor children remained firm to the last. In vain did the parents of one of them beseech him to have pity on their grey hairs, and to obtain release by renouncing their religion; in vain did the magistrates offer them life and rewards if they would abandon the Faith. Entreaty and offers were alike in vain, these brave boys preferred to die for Christ rather than to buy life by forsaking Him.

The Japanese mode of crucifixion is not that which was suffered by our Lord. The victim is fastened to the cross by arms and hands, and by an iron hoop round the neck, which holds the head up; after the victim has been allowed to hang there awhile, a sharp spear is driven into the heart. Such was the death the martyrs were to endure; and, lying each on his cross, they waited the moment when they were to be raised on high. Troops were ranged round the hill to prevent the relations from coming near; but the vast plain was thronged with ■

dense mass of people, come to witness the execution. At first a solemn silence reigned throughout the mighty multitude ; then, at a given signal, the twenty-six crosses were lifted up, and the martyrs were seen hanging each on his cross ; and from the crowd there burst a moan of pity and horror. Then all was silent again. One of the boys turned his head as well as he could and called to one of the men, a priest, to start a Psalm, but he did not hear him, so little Anthony raised his voice and sang out, "Praise the Lord ye servants, O praise the Name of the Lord." Then the two other boys crucified near him joined in, "Blessed be the Name of the Lord from this time forth for evermore." Then the rest of the martyrs joined from the other twenty-three crosses, "The Lord's Name is praised : from the rising up of the sun unto the going down of the same."

And now—as they sang, the executioners went about their work with their lances, and one voice after another failed—and all were hushed before the Psalm was finished. Against the sky could be seen twenty-six crosses with dead forms hanging on them, from which the heart's blood poured away.

Do you wonder, now, that whenever I hear that 113th Psalm sung, I should think of the hill-top in far Japan, with the crosses on it, and the boys starting the Psalm to the tune they had so often sung in Church, and dying before they reached the *Gloria*.

Perhaps you would like to hear something more about Japan. The martyrdom I have described to you occurred in 1597, now I will go on twenty-five years, all of which had been marked with bloodshed.

In Japan is a volcanic mountain, bald, bleak, treeless, whitening beneath the masses of cinders with which it is covered. On your Japanese fans and trays you have a picture of it. The mountain is burning, and there are pits of flaming sulphur on its side; also in one place, called Unsen, are deep pools of boiling water, and one, deeper, and indeed unfathomable, instead of being filled with water, is full of sulphurous mud, that seethes and bubbles, and rises and splutters, in a dark abyss, emitting all the while a horrible stench. The Japanese call it "The mouth of Hell," and it is said that drops from it blister the skin. All kinds of cruelties had been exercised on the Christians without having made them renounce the Faith, at last the Emperor ordered that they should be flung into this horrible pit. A troupe of martyrs were brought together, whose fingers had already been cut off joint by joint, among them women, young girls and boys; one, a little fellow of five years old. There were twenty of them. They were brought to the edge of the well, and ropes were tied round them, and one by one they were let down into the abyss. Some were killed by a single plunge; others, by being quickly withdrawn, were reserved for a second immersion; one, an old man,

was dipped three times before he died. After this first trial of its power, the scalding sulphurous mud well of Unsen became a favourite mode of torture. Christian men, women, and children, even infants, were sent thither in crowds and thrown in. Others were sprinkled with the boiling liquor day by day, often for a period of thirty days, until their bodies were one mass of sores, and they died from the effects of this general ulceration.

Is not this dreadful? Yet—is it not glorious? What said Christ, “Whoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God.” (S. Luke xii. 8.)

“Night is over! day is dawning
On the dreadful scene below—
Night is over! Pagan triumph,
Human anguish, mortal woe,
Day has broken on the martyrs,
Day that never will be done,
In the sunlit fields of Eden,
Gathered, conquerors, everyone.”

I have told you about these martyrs because they are examples to you of Faithfulness unto death; and the subject on which I have to speak to you to-day is Faithfulness, the third of the foundation virtues of Holiness. It is something like Truth, but it is not exactly the same as Truth. Truth means to speak what you know or believe to be true; Faithfulness means to keep what you

have promised, or to fulfil exactly a trust that has been imposed on you.

Now I need not do more than remind you how much we find in the Bible about God's faithfulness. David says that God's faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. He says that he will declare the faithfulness of God from generation to generation. "Thy counsels of old," says Isaiah, "are faithfulness and truth." Man may fail to keep his covenants, but God is faithful, He will never fail. Man cannot be trusted, he will disappoint; but God is perfectly trustworthy, He is sure, a strong tower to all who trust to Him.

Now, as God is faithful and true, so does He desire us to be faithful and true; to speak the truth, and to be trustworthy. If we promise, then to be ready to perform; if we have a trust laid on us, then to execute it punctually. So the faithful are like unto God, they bear in them the image of God. As we like to trace in a child the likeness to his father, so do we like to trace in you the likeness to your Heavenly Father. As the Heavenly Father is faithful, so we look for faithfulness in you. And God is well pleased to find faithfulness on earth among His children. "His eyes," we are told, "are upon the faithful of the land." "The Lord preserveth the faithful." And when S. Paul speaks of good Christians he calls them the faithful. (Eph. i. 1.)

Our Blessed Lord spoke a parable about two sons of one

father. The father told one son to do something for him. The young man answered, "I go, sir," but he went not. Then he laid his command on the other son, who refused to go ; but afterwards thought better of it, and went and did what he was told. Our Lord asks which was the better of the two sons? Neither was really good. One promised and did not perform ; the other was rude and sulky, but nevertheless he did what he was told. The last is certainly the better, though neither is good. So we are shown how very unsatisfactory an untrustworthy, that is, a faithless man, is. If we see that this is so in ordinary things, we must allow it is so also in heavenly things. If it is a bad thing to be faithless to men, it is a bad thing to be faithless to God. We have promised God to keep His Commandments, and to believe the Faith ; so if we wilfully go against His Will, and turn away from the Catholic Faith, then we are like the son who said, "I go, sir," and went not. When we were baptized, God said to us, "Go through life, My son, resist the Devil, obey My Will, believe the Truth." We promise and vow to do this, and then—perhaps we give way to the Devil, we turn aside from God's law, we take up with false teachers and disbelieve the truth. Then we are, I say, like that faithless son who said, "I go, sir !" and went not.

In former times Hungary was a great battle-field between the Turks and the Christians. The Mohammedan Turks were constantly passing armies through Hungary into

Christian Europe, and the brave Hungarians kept, so to speak, the door of Christendom against them, fought them and drove them back. So much had the duty sunk into their hearts, that it grew into a custom for Hungarian men whenever they heard the Creed begun in Church to draw their swords, in testimony that they were ready at any moment to fight—and if need be—to die for the Faith.

Well, we are soldiers of Jesus Christ, and we are bound to fight under His banner against sin, the world, and the Devil, and to hold the Faith untouched and entire. We are not called like those Japanese martyrs to die for the Faith, but we are called to live for it, to be faithful and true servants of God, faithful and true soldiers of Christ.

Let us try, then, in the first place, to hold fast the true Faith, and to keep God's holy Will and Commandments, and next, let us try to be also faithful and trusty in all our dealings with men; never to make rash promises, but, when we have promised, to do that which we have promised; also whenever a trust, or a duty, is laid on us, to be solicitous to execute it thoroughly, punctually, and exactly.

Then, if you have been faithful in that which is little, God will entrust greater things to you, and will say to you, "Well done, good and *faithful* servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

SERMON X.

THE PILLARS.

Main Truths, I. The End of Creation

ACTS XVII. 23.

“In Him we live, and move, and have our being.”

Look at the pillars of the Church. See how they stand in range. See how they are linked by the arches. See how on them the roof leans. See how surely without them the whole building would collapse and become a ruin.

There is no fixed number of pillars in a Church. Some Churches have a great many, some have very few.

As there are pillars in the Church, sustaining it, united to each other by the arches, so are there Truths in the Spiritual Church, which support it, and which are all in relation to each other, one leading on to another.

I am going to talk to you about some of the great Truths of the Christian Faith ; not all, but some. I will begin with this, The End for which we were created. If you were asked, *Why* did God make you ? you would be puzzled to give an answer. Yet it is important that you should know why God created you, gave you a living soul, and placed you in the world.

Why do you suppose God created the world ? Was it because He wanted the world ? No—certainly not. He is perfect in Himself. He needs nothing. No—He created the world for the sake of the creatures He made, that is, He made the world for the sake of making millions and millions of living beings happy.

You know what it is to give pleasure to your little brothers and sisters, to bring them something pretty or sweet, to see their eyes sparkle, and hear them laugh, and clap their hands. It pleases you to give them pleasure, because you have good hearts.

God first made His creatures, and then gave them those things which could make them happy ; and He made His creatures in order that they might enjoy the beautiful and good things He created for them.

There is happiness of two kinds. Happiness here, which is for a time, and happiness hereafter, which is eternal. The living creatures God has made that are without souls, such as insects, fishes, birds and beasts, are

made to be happy here, for a time. We who have souls are made to be happy here and hereafter.

The creatures that God has made are happy, the butterflies that dance about the flowers, the fishes that flash through the crystal waters, the sheep that browse on the moor, the faithful dog that gambols about you ; all are content and happy. You see now why cruelty to animals is wrong, because it is destroying or injuring that happiness which God wills that the poor dumb creatures should enjoy during the brief space of their lives. The animals are given instinct to teach them what to do, and what to avoid. As eyes let you see the road along which you walk, and so prevent your running into the hedge, or falling into the ditch, so instinct shows the animals what is God's way in which they are to live to be happy.

We human beings have been created by God for happiness, and He has given us reason to shew us the way of happiness. Beasts have only to consider how they may be happy for the little while of their life, we have to consider how to be happy through all eternity. So God gives the animals instinct which answers the purpose for them, and He gives us something higher, intended to answer the purpose for us,—that is Reason.

Reason is the voice in us which tells us what we ought to do, and what we ought to avoid ; it requires of us to will and to do such things as it tells us are right for us

to will and to do, and to dislike and avoid such things as it tells us are right for us to dislike and avoid.

Our Reason is God's work. He has so made us, mind and soul, that the Reason in us announces to us what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is bad. But as on account of the Fall, our better nature is weakened in us, and the base nature prevails, God has given us a Revelation of the Truth by which our Reason may be instructed to know for certain what is right and what is wrong. That is why you must be taught the Truth, so that your instructed Reason may be able to direct you aright throughout life to choose those things which conduce to eternal happiness.

Reason teaches us our duty. Reason will teach us our duty to men, but it must be instructed by Revelation to know exactly and rightly what are our duties to God. Consequently there are *natural* duties, and *spiritual* duties; the natural duties are those which Reason tells us we must perform on earth to attain happiness here. The other duties we only know when our Reason has been enlightened by Revelation. We know by nature what are the duties we owe to our fellow men, but by God's Revelation we know the duties we owe to God, the duties which belong to us as having an eternity before us, the obligations which lead to happiness here and hereafter.

God has given us something else besides Reason to

lead us aright ; and that is Conscience. Reason tells us what is right, Conscience urges, approves, the doing of what is right. Conscience first prompts us to follow Reason ; then, it approves our conduct in executing the duties Reason has pointed out to us ; and lastly, when we have acted reasonably, it rewards us with a sense of rest and happiness. If we go against Reason it reproves us, and afterwards stings and reproaches us, and makes us very unhappy.

Now let me repeat in few words the truth I have been teaching you.

God has created us to be eternally happy.

God has given us Reason to show us the way to be happy.

God has given a Revelation of the Truth so that our Reason may be illumined to certainly know the right way to happiness.

God has given us Conscience to approve or rebuke us according as we act in accordance with, or contrary to, Reason.

As this instruction has made you think, to follow me, I will finish with a fable, which I will take from an old English writer who lived more than a hundred years ago.*

In a clear and mighty river, on a time, there lived three

*"The Fool of Quality," by Mr. Brooke, London, 1766, Vol. I., p. 58. I give it word for word except that I have altered a little which to our taste might be taken as irreverent.

silver trout, the prettiest little fishes that anyone ever saw. Now God took a great liking and love to these pretty silver trout, and He let them want for nothing that such little fishes could have occasion for. But two of them grew sad and discontented ; and the one wished for this thing, and the other wished for that thing, and neither of them could take pleasure in anything that they had because they were always longing for something that they had not.

This was very wrong of these two little trout, for God had been exceedingly kind to them ; and had given them everything that was fittest for them ; and He never grudged them anything that was for their good ; but instead of thanking Him for all His care and kindness, they blamed Him in their own minds for refusing them anything that their silly fancies were set on. In short, there was no end of their wishing, and longing, and quarreling, in their hearts, for this thing or another.

At last, God was so provoked, that He resolved to punish their naughtiness by granting their desires, and so to make the folly of these two little stubborn trout an example to all the foolish fish in the whole world. For this purpose He promised to give them whatever they wished for. Now the eldest of these trout was a very proud little fish, and wanted, forsooth, to be set up above all other little fishes. Here, said he, am I put in a poor, narrow, and troubled river, where I am straitened on

the right side, and straitened on the left side, and can neither get down into the ground, nor up into the air, nor go where, nor do any one thing, I have a mind to. I am not so blind, for all, but that I can see well enough, how much better off, and more generously treated, others are. The birds, for instance, fly this way and that way, and mount up to the very heavens, and do whatever they please, because they have been given wings. If I had wings, I should be happy.

No sooner desired than had. He felt the wings he wished for growing from each side, and, in a minute, he spread them abroad, and rose out of the water. At first he felt a wonderful pleasure in finding himself able to fly. He mounted high into the air, above the very clouds, and he looked down with scorn on all the fishes in the world.

He now resolved to travel, and to take his diversions far and wide. He flew over rivers and meadows, and woods and mountains, till, growing faint with hunger and thirst, his wings began to fail him, and he thought it best to come down to get some refreshment.

The little fool did not consider that he was now in a strange country, and many a mile from the sweet river where he was born and bred, and had received all his nourishment. So, when he came down, he happened to alight among dry rocks and sands, where there was not a bit to eat, nor a drop of water to drink ; and so there he lay, faint and tired, and unable to rise, gasping and

stuttering, and beating himself against the stones, till at length he died in great pain and misery.

Now the second silver trout, though he was not so high-minded as the first little proud trout, yet he did not want for conceit enough, and he was moreover a narrow-hearted and very foolish little trout, and provided he himself was snug and safe, he did not care what became of all the fishes in the world. So he thought, I lived contented enough till the other day, when, as I got under a cool bank from the heat of the sun, I saw a rope coming down into the water, and it fastened itself about the gills of a little fish that was basking beside me, and he was lifted out of the water, struggling and working in great pain, quite out of sight. Now, all I desire is to know the meaning of this and of all the other dangers to which we poor little mortal fishes are subjected ; for then I shall have sense enough to take care of my own safety.

No sooner said than done. The understanding of the trout was opened, and he knew the nature and meaning of snares, nets, hooks, and lines, and of all the dangers to which little trout could be liable.

At first he greatly rejoiced in this his knowledge ; and he said to himself, Now, surely, I am the happiest of all fishes ; for, as I understand and am forewarned of every mischief that can come near me, I shall always keep out of harm's way. From this time forth he took care not to go into any deep holes, for fear that a pike might be

there who would swallow him. He also kept away from the shallow places, especially in hot weather, lest the sun should dry them up, and not leave him water enough to swim in. When he saw the shadow of a cloud moving upon the river, he said, Here are the fishermen with their nets, and immediately got on one side, and skulked under the bank, trembling, till the cloud was past. Again, when he saw a fly skimming on the water, or a worm coming down the stream, he did not dare to bite, however hungry he might be, lest in them should lurk the treacherous hook. Thus, this over-careful trout kept himself in continual frights and alarms, and could neither eat, nor drink, nor sleep, in peace. He daily grew poorer and sadder, for he pined away with hunger, and sighed himself to skin and bone ; till at last he died of fear of dying, the most miserable of all deaths.

Now, when God asked the third silver trout what was his desire, Alas, said the little trout, I am but a very foolish and good for nothing little fish, and I do not know what is best for me ; and I wonder how I came to be worth bringing into the world. But, if I must wish for something, it is that Thou wouldst do with me whatever Thou thinkest best, and that I may have no other will than to do as Thou willest. Now, as soon as this precious trout made this prayer in his good and humble little heart, God took such a love for him, as the like was never known. And He took great care of this sweet

little trout, who had trusted himself wholly to His love and good pleasure, and God went wheresoever he went, and was always with him and about him, and was to him as a father and friend ; and He put contentment into his mind, and joy into his heart ; and so this little trout slept always in peace, and wakened in gladness ; and whether he was full or hungry, or whatever happened to him, he was still pleased and thankful ; and he was the happiest of all fishes that ever swam in any water.

SERMON XI.

THE PILLARS.

Main Truths, II. The Will of Man.

PSALM CXLIII. 10.

“Teach me to do Thy Will; for Thou art my God.”

THERE lived in Athens, a very, very long time ago, ■
philosopher called Diogenes. He was born more than
four hundred years before Christ. Men about him were
all heathens, and he groped after the truth. Well—he
came to the conclusion that perfect happiness was to be
found in following the guidance of the reason, in doing
what the reason said was right, and in keeping apart from
all those things which deceived and blinded the reason,
and led man into bondage to his passions. You see he
was quite right. He had hit on the truth. One day the
great conquering king, Alexander, came to see him, and

found him lying in the sun. He talked to him, and promised him anything he liked to ask for. "I want but one thing," answered Diogenes, "and that is, that you would stand out of the sun, for your shadow chills me."

To show men how little was needed to make them happy, he lived several years in a barrel outside the doors of a temple. People would go to him and ask him questions, just as among the Jews the Prophets were asked questions; there was, however, this difference between a prophet and a philosopher. A prophet was given the supernatural enlightenment of God's Spirit; and a philosopher had only the natural light of his own reason. Many odd stories are told of Diogenes. Once when very indignant at the fraud and lying and deceit in Athens, he lighted a lantern, and went all through the town, peering into every street and lane and corner. He was asked what he was looking for with a lantern in broad daylight. He answered, "I am in quest of an honest man."

But what I am telling you about Diogenes is only to lead to one answer of his, which concerns what I am going to speak about to-day. One day he was asked, "What is the grandest and best gift given by God to man." "Freedom," was his answer.

He did not mean that men should be free from all obligations; he meant, freedom to follow their reason.

Try to recal what I taught you last Sunday. I taught

you then that (1) God had made man to be happy; (2) That God had given us reason, to show us how to be happy; and (3) God had given us conscience, to approve our conduct when we followed reason, and rebuke us when we went against reason; (4) I told you, further, that God had revealed to us His Will, by which reason might guide us.

Now, to-day, I am going to speak about our Wills.

Our Reason, illumined by Revelation, tells us what is right for us to do. On the other hand, we are attracted by what is called the Lust of the Flesh, or Sensuality, to do those things which please the senses, and to shun those things which give unpleasant feelings. Since the Fall of Man, the Flesh has gained such an upper hand, that instead of being kept in order and held in subjection by the Reason, it tries to be queen, and rule, and dethrone Reason.

I dare say you remember the fairy story of the Princess, from whose mouth, when she opened it, fell diamonds and pearls. She had a half-sister, who was very spiteful, and when this half-sister opened her mouth, adders and toads came from it. A King sent for the beautiful Princess to be his wife, and queen over his realm, and the stepmother started in a ship with the Princess and her own daughter. On the voyage she thought how nice it would be if her own daughter were made queen instead of the Princess. So one night, when

the Princess was asleep, she and her daughter threw her overboard, and they went on, and the old queen presented her own daughter to the king as the true and beautiful Princess. The king made her his wife, but he was shocked, because, whenever she spoke, poisonous snakes and toads came from her mouth. So he never could love her. How the true Princess was saved from drowning, and came ashore, and was found, and the half-sister driven away, I need not tell you. I am only now speaking of this fable as an illustration of my meaning.

Like the Princess whose lips dropped diamonds is Reason, and like the half-sister from whose mouth came toads and snakes is the Lust of the Flesh. And as the half-sister got the place, and for a while kept it, which properly belonged to the Princess who spoke diamonds, so does the Flesh try to get the upper hand, throw Reason overboard, and become queen over our hearts and all our actions.

But if we are to be truly happy, then, as I have told you, we must follow Reason, and that will raise us to be true men, in the image of God; for Reason is that gift of God to us which we alone among all his creatures possess, and we possess it in order that we may be led by it, and led by it to do that which brings to true and perfect happiness. But if, instead of listening to and being led by Reason, we allow ourselves to be led astray by the senses, by all, that is, that gives pleasure to the body,

against the warnings of Reason, then we fall from true and eternal happiness, and become slaves to the Flesh.

God has given to us Wills, so that we have to decide which we will obey, Reason or the Flesh. We are not dragged against our Wills, but against our Reason, unless our Wills are so weak as to be unable to support the authority of Reason.

You play Oranges and Lemons, a chain of children on one side, and a chain of children on the other, and try which chain is the strongest. So we have Reason in us pulling one way, and our Fleshly appetites in us pulling the other way.

When you are playing Oranges and Lemons, sometimes a strong boy comes and throws all his strength into one side, and pulls the other over. So the Will with us stands and looks on, and then helps weak Reason, when the Will finds that Reason is likely to be pulled over by all the lusts of the Flesh.

When our Wills go on the side of Reason, then they are doing right, but when they go over and pull with our Lusts and Passions, and overthrow Reason in the dirt, then we have Wills turned to evil, against what God has given us Wills for. When we do that we commit *wilful sin*.

You understand now that our Wills are given us to choose to do what our Reason tells us is right ; and that

where our Wills choose what our Reason tells us is wrong, then we fall into very grave sins. When we deliberately go against what we know to be right, then we are going wilfully against God's Will, and so are opposed to God.

Man, accordingly, must try to break the strength of those lusts of the flesh, and overcome them always when they are opposed to Reason. He is sure to be following God's Will when he decides to do that which Reason approves, and not to listen to the allurements of the Flesh, and not be governed by the question whether a thing is pleasing or displeasing.

How is it, do you think, that you are so much inclined to do what is wrong? It is because you think of what will please you for the moment, or give you displeasure at the time; that is why you give way to the senses. But we should always ask, What is right for me to do? not What is most agreeable to me now?

S. Paul says, "The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do,—I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." (Rom. vii. 19, 22, 23.) When this passage was read to a king of France, who was a very sensible man, but led a very bad life, "Ah!" said he, "I know about that very well." But so do all of us. We all feel that we are being drawn away by what is

pleasant, to do things we know are not right. You feel that in you there are two warring powers. On one side the Flesh is pulling, with all its sensual desires, to do those things which give you pleasure for the moment : on the other side is the Reason pulling, to draw you to do that which is right. Then is the time for the Will to interfere, and say, I will do what the Reason says is right, I will not give way to the Flesh. Moreover, you have this comfort, that if you take the side of what is right and reasonable you are taking God's side.

“Brethren, we are debtors, not to the Flesh, to live after the Flesh. For if ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die ; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” (Rom. viii. 12-14.)

You have heard sermons preached about self-denial and self-conquest, and now I think you will understand what is meant by these words. They mean the denial of even harmless wishes of the Flesh, so as to keep the body under, and bring it into subjection, so that it may be completely conquered, and have no chance at all against the Reason. You must know that not all the desires of the Flesh or Body are wrong. It is not wrong for you to like nice and sweet things, it only becomes wrong when love of eating becomes greediness, or when particularness in eating becomes daintiness. So also it is not wrong to be

put out of temper at times, but it is wrong when you give way to temper, and become violent or sulky. It is not wrong to love play, but it is wrong when you become so fond of play that you neglect your lessons for it. It is not wrong to be pleased when you have smart new clothes, but it is wrong when you yield to vanity and love of dress. It is not wrong to be sleepy in the mornings, but it is wrong to give way to laziness.

Thus, you see, Reason tells you where to stop; and if you have got a good, well-directed Will, when your Reason says Stop, then stop you will.

When a coachman is driving four fiery horses down hill, perhaps they dash ahead, and want to run away with the coach. Then he draws the reins, and puts on the drag. You have, perhaps, seen a drag which is put on by screwing, screwing an iron clog tight against the back wheels, so as to make them move slowly. The coachman is Reason, and the drag is the Will, and the horses are the Passions. As long as the horses trot along quietly, all the coachman has to do is to drive them right; but when they run away, then he has to be very firm and wary to restrain them, and prevent them from upsetting the coach; and the drag is the greatest possible help to him. But I have known an old drag so worn down that it did not bite the wheels and arrest them. So is it sometimes with the Will, it is so weak and smooth, and has so little grip in it, that the Reason gets no help from it at all, and

so the furious Passions run away with a man, and bring him to destruction.

It is well, therefore, that you should try your Wills now and then, and see, by self-denial, whether there is any restraining power in them. That is what self-denial is for. It is practising with the Will when there is no immediate danger. Then, in time of temptation, and real peril, the Will will hold fast, and Reason will have a firm hand on the reins, and you will easily master your evil Passions.

SERMON XII.

THE PILLARS.

Main Truths, III. Sin.

S. JOHN VIII. 34.

“Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.”

I WAS travelling one evening over an unknown country, and after night had fallen, I came to where the road branched off in two directions. Which way should I take? I was at a loss to know. There was a signpost, but there was not light enough by which to read what was written on it. After puzzling some time as to which was the right road, I remembered I had some matches in my pocket. So I went to the signpost, climbed up it, struck a match, and held the lighted chip to the direction boards, and so was able to read the names on them, and know which road to take and which to refuse.

I hope that you remember what I have been teaching you hitherto. Let me again briefly go over it. I told you that God has given us Reason to guide us, to show us the road we ought to go. Reason, then, is the direction post. And I told you that we have free wills to choose which way we will go—the way of God's Will, to perfect happiness, or the way of the flesh, to misery. Reason stands where the roads meet, and the arms point the ways. Now when we come to any difficulty we must consult our Reason, and take the right road. You would have cried out that I was a fool, if, after looking at the signpost, I had gone the wrong way. Well! but you do that whenever you give way to the Fleshly Lusts, for that is really nothing else but going the wrong road, knowing it to be the wrong road.

I am going to speak to you to-day about Sin.

Now Sin is nothing else but going the wrong road, knowing it to be the wrong road, or going the wrong road without taking the trouble to see whether it is the right or the wrong road.

Whenever a man has no earnest will to go right, or whenever he wilfully goes wrong, he *sins*; and we call such a man a *sinner*, and so long as he remains turned away from the right, and unwilling to go right, so long he remains in Sin.

It is well for you to know what Sin really is. Sin is the wilful turning away by man in heart or in deed from

a resolution to be true to God, and faithfully to fulfil the duties God has imposed on him.

Whenever, then, you follow your own fancies and lusts, and do not set yourself to fulfil the Will of God, you Sin.

What, then, do you think makes your act to be a Sin? It is the going over of your will to the wrong side. So long as your will agrees with the Will of God you are safe, and in a state of Grace, but directly you give consent to what is evil, and go against God's Will, then you have changed sides, gone over from God to the Devil, and are in Sin.

This is very easy to understand. Your Reason tells you what you ought to do, to please God, and either through an obstinate will, or through a weak will, you go against what your Reason tells you is right, and by doing so you become a sinner.

When you were baptized, the priest signed you with the Sign of the Cross, in token that you should not be ashamed of Christ's Cross, but manfully fight under His banner against Sin, the World, and the Devil, and continue His faithful soldier and servant unto your life's end.

At your Baptism you were enrolled into His army. All your life you have a battle to fight against your spiritual enemies. Now, what would you think of a soldier who fired his gun, and charged against soldiers in

the army of his own king. You would say he had gone over to the enemy.

So, when you Sin, you go over to the enemy, you are fighting against your king, fighting for the Devil. You cannot now, I think, possibly fail to understand what Sin is.

It sometimes happens in a battle that soldiers fire against their own comrades by mistake, blinded by the smoke or dust; that, however, does not make them traitors, because they have not done it wilfully. So, sometimes we may do what is not right through ignorance, and that does not, of course, cut us off from God's favour, and make us wilful sinners.

There is a difference in Sins. There are wilful Sins; these are deadly. There are also Sins of ignorance and Sins of infirmity or weakness, which only become deadly if not struggled against, and allowed to become habitual. A deadly Sin is very dreadful, for it is a deliberate going over to the enemy, or, if you like to think of the roads, a wilful going along on the wrong road, knowing it to be wrong. He who has committed a deadly Sin falls from Grace, and is separated from God. He has passed over from the army of God to the army that is fighting against God. He has become the servant of the Devil, and if he dies in deliberate Sin he will be lost eternally. That is, indeed, the reason why the devils cannot enter Heaven, because they are wilfully in rebellion against

God, they *will* not turn and go back to obedience to Him. They have set themselves against Him so long and so persistently, that their wills are bent into perpetual and unchangeable opposition.

Now I trust that you will not fall into the dreadful condition of fighting against God. Your Sins are more likely to be Sins of infirmity, your wills are not strong enough to resist the attractions of the pleasures of life, and so you yield to what is bad, not because you want to do wrong, but because you are not strong enough to stand to what you know to be right.

Do not, however, suppose that Sins of weakness are not harmful. If not resisted and overcome they become deadly.

You have an instance of how serious a Sin of weakness may be in Pilate. When Jesus was brought before him, he tried Him, and gave his judgment: "I find no fault in this Man." But when the chief priest and people clamoured for His death, he tried Him again, and again he came to the same conclusion, "Ye have brought this Man unto me, as one that perverteth the people; and, behold, I, having examined Him before you, have found no fault in this Man, touching those things whereof ye accuse Him: no, nor yet Herod; for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto Him. I will therefore chastise Him, and release Him." Then the people made a disturbance, crying, "Crucify Him, crucify

Him. And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath He done? I have found no cause of death in Him: I will therefore chastise Him, and let Him go. And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that He might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required."

This gives you a very good insight into the way of a weak man. Pilate's *reason* told him that Christ was innocent, and his *conscience* urged him to release our Lord, but he had not the strength of *will* to do what he knew was right, and so he gave way to the outcries of the people. This, therefore, was a mortal Sin in Pilate, because it was his distinct duty to administer justice. He was put in authority by God and Cæsar for that very purpose. In this instance he knew perfectly well that he was administering wrong judgment, shedding innocent blood, yet he went against his reason and conscience to save himself annoyance, and to give himself release from the clamour of the Jews. He was bound as a Judge to have moral courage to do justice, and he failed to do his duty through cowardice, though warned by his wife, and warned by his own conscience that he was sinning in so doing. Pilate must have been in the habit of going against his conscience in smaller matters, or he would not have allowed himself on this occasion to give such glaring false judgment.

Do you remember how in the battle of Bosworth, Lord Stanley behaved. He appeared at the head of seven thousand men. He had been summoned by King Richard, to whom he owed allegiance ; but he drew up his soldiers at a point as near to the King's army as to that of Henry, Earl of Richmond, who was in arms against the King. Neither knew what Stanley intended to do. The King sent to him his orders, what part he was to take in the battle, and Henry sent messengers to him to urge him to take sides with him against the King. Lord Stanley would not commit himself till the last moment, when the battle had begun, and then, he charged down into the field with his seven thousand men, and went over from the King to Henry, Earl of Richmond.

You must bear well in mind that you are soldiers bound to serve a Heavenly King, and that you must take sides. That is what your will is given you for, to make you declare for the Heavenly King, and manfully to fight under His banner. The Israelites were rebuked by Elijah because they halted, like Lord Stanley, between two opinions. "If the Lord be God, serve Him," said Elijah, "but if Baal be God, then serve him." We are bound to be on God's side. If we turn, like Lord Stanley, in the day of battle, and go over to the enemy, then we are traitors to our God. Sin is treachery to our God. "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came

not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." (Judg. v. 23.) The Canaanites invaded the Holy Land, with nine hundred chariots of iron, and they subdued the people of the Lord, and ground them down for twenty years. Then God raised up Deborah, a prophetess, to call in the people to revolt against the Canaanites, and be free, and those who were faithful rose at her call, and formed an army under Barak. There were, however, some shrewd people at Meroz, and they said, "We will wait and see how matters go. If the Canaanites seem too strong, we will not fight against them, but if the Israelites seem likely to be successful, then we will take up arms also."

However, the Israelites conquered in one pitched battle, and then, Deborah, warned by God, uttered the curse of God on those people of Meroz who would not take God's side in the day of battle.

You see by this that it is bad to take no sides, as it is bad to take the wrong side. If we fight against God and the truth, we Sin, and if we make no fight at all, but take matters easy, and submit to the bondage of evil, we Sin also.

So there are Sins of commission, and Sins of omission. We Sin if we go against our duty, and we Sin if we neglect to do our duty. Therefore, we say in the Confession, "We have left undone those things which we ought to

have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done."

Have you ever been out in a sailing boat, a cutter? Now let me tell you that in a gale all on board have to be careful to shift sides according as the boat is sailing, so as to make ballast on the starboard side, because the boat is leaning steeply over under the sail, and the water foams close to the bulwark on the leeward side, so that a little extra weight on that side would let the water in, and sink the boat.

Very well, always make ballast on the right side, the side of safety: throw the weight of your wills into the side which is *right*, if you go over to the lower side because it seems easiest, you will sink to destruction.

SERMON XIII.

THE PILLARS.

Main Truths, IV. The Effects of Sin.

S JAMES I. 15.

“Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”

I TOLD you last Sunday what Sin was ; now, to-day, I am going to tell you what are some of its Effects.

There was once a king called Mithridates, who was so afraid of being poisoned, that he tried to enure himself to poison, by every day taking a small dose of poison, till at last even large doses did not affect him seriously. Still, there can be no doubt that he undermined his health by so doing, and shortened his own life by many years.

I will tell you what I have seen. Some years ago, when I was living in Germany, there was a man came to the great fairs at Michaelmas and Easter, who swallowed

a spoonful of boiling oil. It was a painful sight, as the man visibly suffered, but plenty of people paid their coppers to go into the booth and see him do it. The town was an University town, and some of the Professors of Medicine examined the man, to make sure there was no imposture in it. He said that he had gradually accustomed his mouth and throat and stomach to scalding drinks. They had spoiled his teeth, and the doctors warned him that he must give up this dangerous trick or he would die in five years. The boiling oil would destroy his digestion, and kill him. Next fair the man appeared again, with a weighing machine, and he tried to get money by persuading people to sit in a chair and be told how many pounds they weighed ; but he got very little by this—and at the next fair, he was again shewing off his powers of drinking boiling oil. One of the doctors who had examined and warned him a year before, remonstrated with him.

“Ah ! Doctor,” he said, “People would not find me a living by coming to be weighed, but they will pay their pennies to see me kill myself. I must do what I can to live whilst I may.”

My children, when we continue in Sin, we are like Mithridates taking poison daily, or like this poor showman drinking scalding oil, with the certainty that we are going to destruction.

I might the other day have spoken of Sin as a poison ;

but I spoke of it as a rebellion. You may look at it in either light. If we continue in rebellion against God we shall be cast out into eternal darkness, with the devils. If we go on drinking in the poison of Sin, we shall kill the spiritual life in us, till our souls sink into eternal death.

To-day I am going to speak to you about the *Effects of Sin*. They are three. 1. Sin marks the soul ; 2. Sin weakens the will ; 3. Sin cuts off from the Grace of God.

1. Sin marks the soul ; that is, it leaves a trace, or scar, on the character. If you have cut your finger, the wound may be healed, but the mark remains as a scar all your days. If you tear your clothes, they may be mended or patched, but the evidence remains that they were sound but now are mended. So, with the poor showman I have told you about. If he left off taking the boiling oil he would never be exactly the same as if he had never injured his digestion by taking what was unwholesome. If you spill the ink over your copy book, the stain may be got out with salts of lemon, but still the trace remains, and the page does not look as if it had never been stained.

Now, we know that by the Blood of Jesus Christ, we can be cleansed from all sin, but there is one thing we never can get back—innocence. If innocence is lost, we become penitents. God in His mercy will open heaven to those who have sinned and repented, but such can never attain to the transcendent glory of the unfallen. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the

moon, and another glory of the stars, and one star differs from another star in glory. We know that at the last some will hardly be saved, they will be as brands plucked from the fire. It is very possible for one who has been a sinner, and has repented, to surpass one who has never fallen into mortal sin, in the fervour of his love, and the zeal of his work for God ; but he can never receive the particular character of innocence which he has lost.

II. Sin weakens the will for good. When you have committed Sin, and given way to the Devil, it is always very much harder to make up your minds to break with Sin, and turn over to God, than it is to resist a first Sin. You feel a struggle of conscience against giving way the first time. You find less difficulty the second time, still less the third, and at last it is quite easy to Sin. Sin becomes a habit; just as swallowing the boiling oil became a habit.

The last time I was at the fair I have told you of, the poor showman did not appear, and I heard he was dying in excruciating pains in a hospital. Now think of his condition of mind. As he lay in agony, unable to eat wholesome food, he must have looked back to the first spoonfuls of boiling oil he drank, and have said, "Oh ! I wish ! I wish I had been warned by the burning in my throat and mouth, and had not tried to accustom myself to it. After a while it became easier for me to take the scalding fluid, but, for all that, it was destroying me. Then the doctors warned me, and I made a little attempt

to give it up, but I went back to it—and here I am dying in torments.”

Think also how that every time he took the boiling oil it weakened his digestion, till at last it had completely destroyed it.

It is just the same with Sin. When it has been long indulged in, when, that is, it has become *habitual*, then it has so weakened the will that the will has hardly power to resist : and the conscience, after stinging and reproaching, ceases to act.

You have heard that habit becomes a second nature. Have you ever tried to saw through logs of wood ? You find that your arm gets tired very soon. Try next day, and you can saw longer. The third day still more, and so on, till, if you work steadily, you can go on all day sawing up wood. You found when first you began your scales on the piano that your fingers ached after a quarter of an hour. Soon you were able to go on practising for half-an-hour, then three-quarters, then an hour, even more, without tiring your fingers. So is it with doing what is good. You can get into the habit of doing right, and then there is little difficulty in resisting evil. But, alas ! it is also possible to get into the habit of doing what is wrong, and the more practise you have in doing wrong the easier it seems to you to live apart from God, the less inclined you are to turn and do what is right.

Have you ever dreamed of being bound by a thousand

little threads, so that, though you want to escape and go in one direction, you cannot? Well, habitual sins become little threads binding us, so that we cannot break away, and be free to do what is right, what we know very well is right, and what we know we ought to do.

Do you remember how in Gulliver's travels we are told of his bondage in Lilliput, by the tiny people there? They were so small that he could have killed any number of them with ease, but they took advantage of his being asleep to fasten him down to the ground by thousands of little strings, and threads fastened to his hair, so that when he wanted to rise he could not, he was a prisoner. That is exactly what habitual sin does for us, it binds us so fast that the will and power to break away go from us.

III. Sin cuts off from the Grace of God.

I have already told you of God's Grace, that it is Natural and Supernatural. All men, whether heathen or Christian, have Natural Grace, but only the baptized, those in the Spiritual Kingdom, have Supernatural Grace. I have also told you that it is by God's Grace that we are moved to do His Will. Now, when we Sin, we go against Grace, and we lose first Supernatural Grace, and, lastly, if we continue in Sin till hardened, we lose Natural Grace as well.

Natural Grace is given, as you have been told, to enlighten and help us to do the ordinary, plain duties of life, and Supernatural Grace is given in order that we may be enlightened and strengthened to perform the special

duties that belong to us as Christians, as members of the Spiritual Kingdom.

But if we resist God's Spirit, He will not always strive with us. If we will not listen to the prompting of the Holy Ghost, He will not continue to speak to us, and we shall be given over, as S. Paul says, to a "reprobate mind." Grace is given to us to profit withal, to use it, and if we do not use it, it is taken from us.

I dare say that you have seen a little stream of water brought to a mill. Perhaps some stones and earth fall into it. The stream is choked, and the water does not come on to turn the wheel, and as the wheel does not turn properly, the millstones will not grind. What must be done? The stones and earth must be taken out of the stream, so that it may flow freely again. So sins obstruct the flow of Grace, which keeps the spiritual life working in us.

Again, I dare say that you have noticed how that the lamps get dull, and will not burn brightly, but flicker and smoke the glasses. What causes this? The soot and dust have accumulated, and clog the little holes by which the air penetrates to the flame and helps to make it burn white and free. Take a brush and clear away all the dirt, and the flame is beautiful again. Those of you who are not accustomed to paraffin lamps, but to gas, will know how that at times the flame spirts and blinks. Then you know that water has got into the pipe, and obstructs the

current of gas. You must have the water got out or you will not get satisfactory light, and very probably the the flame will go out.

It is the same with Grace. Sin chokes the flow, and and prevents the flame of the spiritual life from burning and shining brightly.

I have been into an old house which had been untenanted and uncared for for quite a hundred years. The glass windows were so dirty that scarce light enough came in by which one could see. Cobwebs had grown over them, and dirt had settled in the cobwebs: and outside, ivy had crept over the windows and matted them with leaves. The windows had to be picked clear of all the ivy outside, and the cobwebs inside, and the glass well washed, then the sun shone brilliantly into the rooms. Sin, in the same way, obstructs the light of God's truth from shining into our hearts; and just as the cobwebs and the ivy grew thicker, and became more obstructive, year after year, so does Sin entangle the heart, and rob it of God's Grace, more and more effectually, the longer it is allowed to grow, unsisted, and uncut away.

Remember, then, my children, what you have this day been taught about Sin. It has three effects: 1. It marks or scars the soul. 2. It weakens the will. 3. It arrests the flow of God's Grace.

If, then, the effects of Sin are so dreadful, well may we "flee from Sin as from the face of a serpent." (Ecclus. xxi. 2.)

SERMON XIV.

THE PULPIT.

Repentance.*

ROMANS II. 4.

“The goodness of God leadeth thee to Repentance.”

IN my last two addresses to you, I tried to make clear to you what Sin is. I told you that it was a turning away from God, and giving consent to what is against God's Will. I told you, also, that a sinner is one who is an adversary to God. I told you, also, what are the effects of Sin on us. To-day I must explain to you how a sinner can return to God, recover his place, and be reconciled.

* In my “Village Preaching for a Year,” 2nd Series, I have gone over the same ground in the Sermons for the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Sundays in Lent. I am obliged to treat the same subject in this address, to give completeness to the series of instructions. Having taught what Sin is. I must teach how recovery is made.

Do you see this Pulpit? Yes, you do. What is it for? For the preacher. Of course, for the preacher. But why does the preacher occupy it? I will tell you. For two purposes. One is to teach God's people the way of truth and right, and the other is to urge them to turn and repent when they have wandered out of the way of truth and right.

S. John the Baptist was sent before Christ to preach Repentance. On the Third Sunday in Advent, the Church teaches us to pray, "O Lord Jesu Christ, who at Thy first coming didst send Thy messenger to prepare Thy way before Thee; Grant that the ministers and stewards of Thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready Thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at Thy second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in Thy sight." So you see that we, the ministers of God, are to try all we can to do what S. John did, bring sinners to Repentance.

I am going to speak to you to-day about Repentance.

You have heard how you can fall away from God. You have been told what is the nature and what are the Effects of Sin. Now I am going to tell you about the way—the only way—by which you can recover after falling away into Sin. That way, that only way, is *Repentance*.

We know very well that by the Death of Christ pardon

for sin is to be had, not by Christians only, but by all men. S. John says, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John ii. 1, 2.) "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (iv. 10.) So, by the mouth of the prophets, God called His people to reconciliation. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel." (Ezek. xxxiii. 11.) God is ready to pardon and receive into favour again, but He demands something on the part of the sinner, and that thing is Repentance.

As man goes astray by his free will, doing what is forbidden, or neglecting what is commanded,—that is, sins, so must he by his free will return to God, and show himself ready to do what is commanded, and avoid what is forbidden. He must also prove to God that he really and heartily hates transgression, or Sin, and that he really and heartily desires to walk all the days of his life in obedience to God, and to undo, as far as lies in his power, the evil effects wrought by his previous wrong doing.

This complete turning away from Sin, and returning to

God, is Repentance. It is not a turning in word only, but in will. It demands a break off from all previous disobedience and Sin. It demands a sincere sorrow for past transgression. It demands an honest and hearty acknowledgment of sin and past unworthiness. Such only is true Repentance.

I will give you an instance of true Repentance, then one of false Repentance.

David sinned against God. He was filled with pride, and he numbered Israel, knowing that thereby he was offending God. Then God sent His angel to rebuke him. David at once acknowledged his fault, and said, "I have sinned." God warned him that chastisement must fall on Israel because of this. David, full of meekness and true humility, cast himself before God, and bade Him do what He willed. But when a plague came on his people, then, in the anguish and penitence of his heart he cried out, "Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly : but these sheep, what have they done? Let Thine hand, I pray Thee, be against me, and against my father's house." (2 Sam. xxiv. 17.) As David says in the 51st Psalm, "A broken and contrite heart, O God, shalt Thou not despise."

God forgave the sin of David. "I said, I will confess my sins unto the Lord, and so Thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin."

Now look at Saul. Saul had been ordered by God to destroy the Amalekites. But he only half-executed the command of God. He saved Agag the king, and the best of the sheep and oxen. Then Samuel came to him at Gilgal, where he was with his officers and soldiers, and said, "Wherefore didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord? Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king. And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned : for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord." So far so good. You would suppose he was pardoned. But not so. His Repentance was not sincere. In the first place, instead of laying the blame on himself and excusing the people, he laid the blame on the people to exonerate himself. He went on, "I have sinned—because I feared the people and obeyed their voice." Then he entreated Samuel to remain with him. Samuel refused. Then the king said again, "I have sinned : yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel." Here was no humility, only pride. He professed Repentance, not that he was contrite, but only in order to persuade the prophet to remain in the camp to shew him honour before the captains and soldiers.

Now I think we can see clearly what go to make up a

true Repentance. A true Repentance must be made up of three things, as three colours go to make up the rainbow. These three are—I. Contrition : II. Confession : III. Purpose of Amendment.

I. Contrition. That means real, sincere, hearty sorrow for sins. You must show God that you grieve at having offended Him. The 51st Psalm shews you the heart of King David in its contrition, and also shews you how your heart ought to feel when you have sinned against God.

II. Confession. You must acknowledge your sin to God. Remember David's words, "I said, I will confess my sins unto the Lord ; and so Thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin." When Adam and Eve had sinned, God called them to confess their sin, and instead of doing so Adam put the blame on his wife, and Eve put the blame on the serpent. That was what Saul also did, he put the blame on the people. But that is not what David did. He took the blame to himself.

III. Purpose of Amendment. You can understand that a turning to God is unreal and insincere, if there be no determination to serve God and do His Will for the future. God said, by the prophet Ezekiel, "If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all My statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him : in his righteousness that he hath done

he shall live." (Ezek. xviii. 21, 22.) "Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed, and make you a new heart and a new spirit." (30, 31.)

These are the three elements that go to make up a true Repentance. If any one of these is wanting, the Repentance is imperfect, and will not be accepted by God.

I think that you will understand the three qualities of ■ true Repentance better if I illustrate my meaning from what might happen to a child.

Suppose that your father had ■ very choice apricot tree in his garden, of which he wanted to preserve the fruit, and that he told you, "Mind, you are not to go into my garden and pick any of the apricots off the tree. If you do, I shall be very angry."

Now, the apricots ripen, and look very tempting, so one day you get into the garden, and eat first one, then another, and so on—they are so delicious you cannot leave them—till you have cleared the tree. Next day your father finds out that his apricots have been taken, and is much disturbed, and enquires who stole the fruit. Perhaps some one has seen you, and tells your father, and he is very angry, and punishes you severely.

But—suppose that, after you had eaten the apricots,

you waited till your father came home, and then went to him of your own accord, with tears and sobs, into his library, and said, "Papa, I have been very naughty. I have done what you forbade me to do. I have been into the walled garden and taken the apricots, there is not one left. But, papa, I really never, never will do it again." Then I think your father would open his arms and take you to his heart, and kiss you, and say, "I forgive you, my boy, because you have come of your own accord, freely, to confess your fault to me, and because your tears shew me that you are sorry and ashamed of what you have done, and because I believe that this will be a warning to you, and that you are heartily resolved not to take my apricots again."

Would your father forgive you if you said, "I took the apricots, and next year, when there are more, I will steal them again?" No—because there would be no *purpose of amendment*.

Would your father forgive you if you denied having stolen the fruit, or put the blame on someone else? No—because there would be no *confession of sin*.

Would your father forgive you if you came before him sullen, and confessed it because you had been found out, and there was nothing to be got by denying it, and you shewed no sorrow for your disobedience? No—because there would be no *contrition*.

It is just the same with your Heavenly Father. All

sin is disobedience to His commands: and forgiveness only is given on condition of our true Repentance, and Repentance is only true, when we are sorry for having offended our loving Heavenly Father, when we acknowledge our fault to Him, and when we show Him that we are in earnest in our desire to amend.

The Corinthian Christians had once done what was very wrong, and S. Paul wrote in his first Epistle to rebuke them. They repented, and he wrote again, in his second Epistle, and this is how he describes their repentance. "I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance. For ye were made sorry after a godly manner. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation. For behold this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge!" (2 Cor. vii. 9-11.) He means that their Repentance made them careful not to sin again, then it made them clear their consciences by a true confession, then it made them indignant and ashamed of themselves, so they were contrite, then it made them fear their own weakness, and filled them with desire and zeal to amend their ways, and it made them revenge the wrong on themselves, that is, punish themselves for what they had done amiss, so as to shew to God how thoroughly sincere they were.

SERMON XV.

THE PRAYER DESK.

Prayer.

S. JOHN XVI. 24.

“Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.”

You will see in the Church a Desk from which the Prayers are said by the priest. Sometimes the Desk is in the Chancel; sometimes it is in the Nave, or Body of the Church. As I shall explain to you on another occasion the Chancel represents Heaven, and the Body of the Church represents the Church on earth. When the Desk is in the Chancel, the priest praying at it represents to you Christ as our Intercessor in Heaven. When it stands in the Body of the Church, then the priest acts representatively as the leader of the Prayers of the Church Militant. Neither is wrong; both are right; for the

priest is both. He leads your Prayers, and he also represents to you the intercession of Christ in Heaven.

I have spoken to you about our duties to God and to man, and about Sin, and Repentance. Now I must speak to you about Prayer, the way in which we communicate with God.

When I was taught to swim, a cord was tied round me and I was made to jump into the water, whilst my father stood on the shore, holding the cord. He kept me up so that I did not sink, and when I felt I was going under the water I drew at the cord, and pulled myself up. After a while I learnt to do without the cord. If, at first, I had not had the cord to sustain me, I should have gone below the surface, and might even have been drowned.

Much as a boy swimming in the sea, sustained by a cord which his father holds, so are we in this world, and the cord by which we hold to God our Heavenly Father, is Prayer. There is this difference, however, in time we learn to swim without the cord ; but we can never meet the waves of this troublous world, and keep up, without the cord of Prayer.

I will give you another illustration, which is perhaps better. Have you ever seen a diver go down to the bottom of the sea ? Some divers go after pearls. Others go after wrecks. They wear iron and glass helmets over

their heads, connected with an apparatus in a boat, which pumps air down a pipe to them, so that they can breathe under water. But that is not all. They also carry down with them a cord, and they communicate with those in the boat by means of the cord. When they give one little tug at the cord, it means, "Move more to the right;" two little tugs mean, "Move to the left," and three tugs mean, "Wind up a little," and four tugs mean, "Pull me up altogether;" and so on, they tell those in the boat what they want by means of the cord.

Well! so are we in the world searching among the wrecks that strew it, for what we can find, or wandering about after pearls and other treasures, and we communicate with God above by means of Prayer. That is the cord by which we tell Him our necessities, and ask His help. And as those in the boat pump down fresh air to the divers below, and as, without this, divers below would be unable to live under water, so does God send down to us His Grace to keep our spirits alive. As the diver cannot do without *getting* his supply of air, and *telling* those above what he needs, so is it with us. We must tell God our necessities, and get His Grace to help us. We tell Him by the cord of Prayer.

I have heard of a diver who was so much engaged on some things he found about a wreck that he did not notice how his cord got entangled and looped about some of the pieces of the wreck. All at once he saw a shark

coming at him. Then he tried to pull at the rope, but it was out of order, and before he could get it right, the shark snapped at him, and bit him in half.

I am afraid we, also, neglect our cord of Prayer, and do not keep it in good working order.

To-day I will speak to you about the nature of Prayer; and I beg you to keep the thought in your mind of Prayer being the cord by which we communicate our necessities and make our desires known to God.

1. We must never forget our dependence on God; never forget that we owe all we have to Him, our creation and our preservation. He sent us down here into the world, and He keeps us alive in body and soul whilst we are here. This let us never forget; let us always live in the recollection of our dependence on God—this is the very first thing necessary for Prayer. As the diver must never forget that he is not on dry land, and that he can only get air to breathe, and help to shore, from those in the boat, and as, if he forgets this, and gets his cord knotted, or the tube twisted that conveys air to him, he falls into great danger, so is it with us, we must always remember that our safety depends on God above, and that we live on His Grace, and that we are bidden to tell Him our needs by means of Prayer.

S. Paul told the Corinthians, "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Cor.

x. 31.) That is, keep up your communication with God in everything on which you are engaged. To the Colossians he wrote much the same advice, "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus." (Col. iii. 17.) David says, "I have set God always before me." (Ps. xvi. 9.)

You have heard a good deal of late about wars in Africa; of our troops marching into the interior; they have penetrated to Abyssinia, and Ashantee, and to the Soudan. You have, no doubt, also heard that the first principle of good generalship is to keep up a communication with the base, by which food, and ammunition, and fresh soldiers, can be sent forward, and the sick and wounded can be sent back, and the necessities of the army be made known. If an army were to march through the desert without keeping open a line of communication, they would be cut off in the rear, and receive no more supplies.

Now, something in this way is it with us. We are fighting in this world against Satan, and we must keep open our communication with our base, or we shall meet with defeat and utter destruction. Our safety lies—whether we conquer or are beaten—in having our communication open. That line of communication is Prayer, and our base is in Heaven. Thither we send our needs, our sorrows, our cries for help, and thence come the supplies that enable us to continue fighting, and, in the end, to conquer.

This, then, is the first point I want you to remember, *To set God always before you*, to remember your dependence on Him. Never to allow your communication with Him to be broken.

II. Next, let us see what are the qualities of Prayer. Properly speaking, there are five; Prayer should be recollected, disengaged, earnest, definite, and persevering; but as these are too many for you to remember, I think we can reduce them to three, which you may remember.

Real, effectual Prayer must be *earnest, definite, and persevering*. We will see what is meant by these words.

I. In the first place, when we pray, we must be in *earnest*. David says, "Hearken unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips." (Ps. xvii. 1.) Also God, by His prophet Isaiah, rebukes His people, because they honour Him with their lips, whilst their hearts are far from Him. (Isai. xxix. 13.) "With their mouth," says Ezekiel, "they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness." (Ezek. xxxiii. 31.)

Consider. Suppose you were to ask your father to give you a holiday, but you asked it in an indifferent manner, without showing that you cared a bit whether you had it or not, he would probably answer and say, "No, certainly. If you were sincere in wishing for a holiday, you would ask for it earnestly. But as you shew me such indifference, I certainly will not grant it."

Dionysius, Tyrant or King of Sicily, reigned at Syracuse, which he fortified with strong walls. He built a large fleet of ships, and put an army on board, and went with the fleet on an expedition to Locri, in Lower Italy. Now there was a man called Dion, who was a cousin of the Tyrant, whom Dionysius had banished from Syracuse. Dion gathered together a force, and ships, and determined to attack Syracuse, and dethrone the king. He waited his time till he knew that the army and fleet were at Locri; then he made ready to fall on Syracuse. As soon as the Syracusans saw the fleet of Dion, and knew that they were about to be attacked, they sent a letter to Locri by a messenger to inform the king of the danger. The man put the letter in his leather pouch along with some fried fish for his dinner. The day was hot, and he lay down in the sun, and as his pouch inconvenienced him, he took it off and threw it down on the ground beside him, and then went to sleep. Whilst he slept, up came a hungry wolf, and the beast snuffed the fried fish, and made a bite at the leather bag, and ran away with it, and the fish and the letter; so Dionysius did not get the news in time, and lost his city and kingdom.

Do you see that the king lost crown and throne, because the messenger was indolent, and wanting in eagerness to bring him the news? If he had been alive to the danger, and anxious to bear the news, he would have gone as hard as he could travel, and not rested till he reached the

king ; but he was indifferent and lazy, and so the city was lost.

If we will have our prayers heard, we must be in earnest, we must show God that we really desire those things for which we ask ; and then He will hear us and grant us our petitions.

2. Again, Prayer must be *definite* ; that is, we must ask for something we want, and not make vain repetitions like the heathen, or vague ones which mean nothing at all. We must know our wants, and knowing our wants, we shall ask to have them supplied.

Do you suppose you would get anything from your earthly father, if you went before him with a petition, and when he asked, What is it that you really want ? were unable to tell him, because you had not made up your own mind. He would send you away, saying, " Find out what you want, and then come and tell me ; but do not come and tell me you want something when you do not know yourself what it is that is wanting." That, you may be sure, would be his answer. I beg you will observe that there is something very clear and to the purpose in all the petitions of the Lord's Prayer ; and our Blessed Lord gave us this prayer as a model. At one time, before he was baptized, S. Augustine was wont to pray, " Make me holy, O Lord—but not yet." He had not made up his mind to serve God as a good Christian. He thought that some day or other he would like to be a good man, but he wished that

day to be put off for a very long time. Now we must ask for those things which we know are good for us, and right and in accordance with God's will, desiring to have them.

3. Thirdly, Prayer must be *persevering*. S. Paul exhorts the Thessalonians, "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. v. 17), and the Romans to continue instant, that is, in incessant prayer. (Rom. xii. 12.) But then, our Lord spake a parable "to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke xviii. 1), and that was the parable of the importunate widow. After speaking that parable, He spoke the parable of the Publican and Pharisee, to shew that not only must men be persevering in prayer, and earnest, but also that they should be definite. The Publican prayed for one thing—pardon, whereas the prayer of the Pharisee was a rambling address without any point.

So, remember, not only to be earnest in prayer, and to pray for something you know you want, but also, not to be discouraged if you do not get your petition answered at once, but persevere, for "men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

SERMON XVI.

THE SCREEN.

The Church visible and invisible.

EPH. III. 14, 15.

“Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.”

THE Church is divided into two main divisions, the Body of the Church and the Chancel; and this division represents the Catholic Church, which is made up of those members of the Spiritual Kingdom who are on earth, “Militant,” and those who have passed through death to the state beyond, who are in Paradise.

The Church is divided into two parts by the Chancel Arch, and in old Churches, and in a good many new Churches, by a Screen. In the Eastern Church the Screen is very much more a feature than it is in the

West. There it is carried up as a wall—as it is with us in some of our Cathedrals, high up, with doors in it, through which the Altar can be seen; and the Screen is covered with paintings in gold and colour, representing apostles, and virgins, and martyrs. In our old English Churches, the Screens were mostly of wood, not of stone, and were carved so as to be seen through, and were not usually solid like the Screens in the Eastern Churches. With us also, they were painted with representations of the holy ones, who have finished their course, and have entered into their rest. Moreover, in old times, above the Screen stood the Rood, that is, a cross with our Lord stretched on it.

Now what do you suppose this Screen meant?

I have told you that the body of the Church represents Christ's Catholic Church, His body of faithful ones on earth, and the Chancel represents Heaven. What stands between the Church militant and the Church triumphant? Death, of course.

So the Screen signified *death*. Now you see why it was covered with paintings of saints, and why above it stood Christ's cross. It was because Christ took away the terrors of death by His dying, and because death is made glorious to us by the death of His saints.

You will remember that in the old temple a curtain hung between the holy place, and the holy of holies.

The holy place corresponds with the body of a Christian Church, and the holy of holies corresponds with the Chancel. In the tabernacle and the temple a great curtain hung down between the two, so that none could see what was beyond. But when Christ died, the veil was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom, to shew that by His death, the mystery and doubt about the future state were taken away. Now, death does not block our vision, we see through it, beyond, into Heaven. Before Christ's death, no one knew what was beyond death, now we do know ; what is beyond has been revealed to us.

The Spiritual Family of God, the Kingdom of Heaven, or the Catholic Church, is therefore made up of two parts. One part is here on earth, enduring temptation, and sorrow, and trial ; is fighting against the world, the flesh, and the devil. This we call the Church militant. The other part is in Paradise, resting from its labours, without more temptation, and freed from conflict. That is the Church invisible ; but that is not made up of men only, to it belong also the holy angels. If we are faithful here, we shall pass on through death, and pass out from the Church visible to the Church invisible, as you can walk from the Font up the passage and through the Screen doors into the Chancel. All the blessed ones who have finished their course, and have kept the faith—Mary, the Mother of Jesus, S. Peter and S. Paul, S. John, the beloved disciple, and S. John the forerunner, S. Thomas

who doubted, S. Mary Magdalene who poured the spike-nard over our Lord's feet, and many, many others of whom we have heard, S. Laurence who was stretched on a gridiron over a slow fire, S. Sebastian who was shot to death with arrows, S. Agnes whose head was struck off, S. George who was tortured on a rack, those blessed ones I told you about in Japan, boys and women and men, who were crucified—all who have been faithful unto death are there. And others also, those whom we have known, who have died in the faith of Jesus—all, all have passed through death, out of the Church visible here on earth, into the Church invisible, in Paradise. When S. John saw into heaven, he beheld a great company clothed in white, and he wondered, "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" And he was told, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the Throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat." (Rev. vii. 13-16.)

This is a very old building in which we are. It has stood for many hundreds of years. When it was newly built to the glory of God the Bishop came to consecrate

it. Now, previous to his entering, no one was allowed inside, and the floor had been strewn with dust and fine ash. When the doors were opened, he came in. He held in his hand a pastoral staff, that is, a shepherd's crook, with a sharp point at the bottom, and when he took the first step inside, he wrote on the dust and ash, with the point of his staff, the letter Alpha, or α , the first letter of the Greek alphabet. Then he went on, up the nave, writing the letters in order, in the dust and ashes, till he came to the altar step, where he wrote Omega, the last letter of the Greek alphabet. The meaning of this curious ceremony was this. In Revelation we are told that Jesus appeared to S. John, in glory, and said, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." (Rev. i. 8.) And again He said, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." (II.) Again in the twenty-first chapter we read, "He that sat upon the throne said, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." (xxi. 5, 6.) And for the fourth time Christ says the same words in the last chapter (xxii. 13).

The Bishop, in consecrating this Church, wrote from Alpha to Omega on the floor to shew that the Church from beginning to end was of Christ and for Christ. That He was her beginning from which she sprung, He the end to whom she looked ; that all her doctrine is of Him and from Him, all her ministrations are for Him, all her

strength is from Him, all her efforts are towards Him, all her life is of Him. If she exercises authority, it is because it is His; the grace she confers through her Sacraments is His; the doctrine she teaches is His; all who are baptized by her, are baptized into Him, all who are fed at her Altars are nourished by Him. Christ is the one head of the one body, the Church; the one King over the one kingdom, the Church; the one Father in the one household, the Church; the one Shepherd over the one fold, the Church.

You sometimes hear people talk as if there were many scores of Churches, a Baptist Church, a Methodist Church, a Lutheran Church, a Calvinist Church, a Free Church, a Mormon Church, and so on. As if Christ were head to many scores of bodies. Yet there is but one, holy, Catholic Church throughout the world. He founded but one Kingdom, not many, one Church and one only, which He calls His bride. As in Christendom a man may have but one wife, so Christ has but one Church, and that is the one Spiritual Kingdom. He founded it when He had risen from the grave, in the forty days between His Resurrection and His Ascension.

When our Lord Jesus Christ prayed before He was taken, on the night when He ate the Passover with His disciples and instituted the Holy Communion, He prayed that His Church might always be one, and that it might be *visibly* one, so that the world might believe on Him

through seeing the unity of the Church. He said, "I pray—that they all may be one—that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me,—that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me." Twice He gives the reason. The Church is to be one in the sight of all men, that so men may be led to believe on Him.

When so many bodies of men profess and call themselves Christians, and pretend to be Churches, it is most necessary for you to know what are the marks of the true Church, the true Kingdom of Christ. What these marks are I will tell you next Sunday. To-day I will only insist to you on the Unity, that is, the Oneness of the Church.

In old times in Germany there was an Emperor ; but Germany was divided into a number of sovereign states. There were 1,800 independent sovereign states, in each of which the prince had right of life and death, coined his own money, made his own laws, maintained his own army and court. They all pretended to acknowledge the Emperor, but really they only obeyed him as far as they liked, and when he ordered anything not to their fancy they disobeyed him. I have counted up the number of Protestant sects in England who have registered their chapels, and they amount to 200. In America there must be some hundreds more. All these teach different things, have different usages ; all are of modern invention, not one is more than three hundred years old, and most

are not fifty years old. Are not these like the independent states of Germany which pretended to be under the Emperor, but which really obeyed him only as far as they liked ?

It is true that all parts of the Church are not exactly the same in every particular, any more than Frenchmen, and Italians, and Chinese, and Arabs are like Englishmen, yet you would always say that an Italian, or a Chinese, or an Arab was a man as much as an Englishman. There is a little difference, but in all important particulars they are alike. So it is with the Church, in different parts of the world in little matters there are, and may be, differences, but in all essential matters there must be the great marks which distinguish the Church from the sects, as truly as a man is distinguishable from an animal.

Or, again, as I have told you, the Church is the Army of God. In an army there are different bodies of men, wearing different uniforms, and using different weapons. The Lancers have spears, the Life Guards wear steel breast-plates, the Hussars have fur caps and braided coat sleeves over one shoulder, the Artillery manage the cannons, the Sappers and Miners carry axes ; but though wearing different uniforms, and carrying different weapons, they all march under one general, fight under one flag, obey one military code. So it is in the Church, there are certain differences here and there, but in the main thing it is one.

SERMON XVII.

THE WALLS.

The Marks of the Church.

S. JOHN X. 16.

“There shall be one fold, and one Shepherd.”

THIS is the prophecy of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not only a prophecy, it is a promise as well. He tells us that He is Himself the Good Shepherd, and He assures us that He will not have many different folds, but one, one only. “There shall be *one fold*, and *one Shepherd*.”

When you go through a village you soon see the parish Church. You know at once what it is. You do not mistake the post office, or the school, or the village shop for a Church. You know the Church at once by its appearance. So, in like manner, you should know at once the Spiritual Church of Christ, from everything else, by its

appearance. Christ intended that it should be recognised. But Christ warned us that in the last days there would be plenty of sects pretending to be the Church. "If any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert; go not forth: behold, He is in the secret chambers; believe it not." (S. Matt. xxiv. 23-26.) Also S. Paul tells us that in the last days many shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. That, he says, will be when "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine—and they shall turn away their ears from the truth." (2 Tim. iv. 3, 4.)

We are also told that the last days will be much like the days before the Flood. There was then but One Ark, in which was safety, and only those who took refuge in it could escape destruction; so is there only one Church, and in it alone is safety.

You will find that things are now just as Christ said they would be. One says, Lo, here is Christ! I shall find Him in the Salvation Army! And another says, Lo, there is Christ among the Bible Christians, who are having a revival! But what is Christ's warning? "Believe it not," He says, "Behold, I have told you before."

How, then, are we to know where He is to be found? Why, can we doubt? In His own Church which He founded before He ascended into Heaven.

After He had risen, He gathered His Apostles together, and He said to them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." By these words He gave them His commission and authority. He sent them, they did not go of themselves.

"Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." That was the way in which the Apostles were to admit people into His Kingdom or Church.

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." By these words He gave them authority to teach the very incorrupt truth.

"And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (S. Mark xvi. 15; S. Matt. xxviii. 18-20.) By these last words He assured the infallibility and perpetuity of His Church, that is, He assured men that in it the Truth would always be taught, and it would always remain "the pillar and ground of the Truth," until the end of the world. So you see that relying on our Lord's most solemn words before He went into Heaven, we know that there is a Church in which the very Truth is taught with authority from Him, and which will never die out, but will remain one and the same from

the time that He went up into Heaven. till He comes again out of Heaven at the last day.

Now, can any of the sects say that they date back to the founding by Christ? No. The oldest we have, Lutheranism and Calvinism, were founded three hundred years ago, and most of the rest are much later. Wesleyanism was founded by John Wesley, who died about a hundred years ago. The Bible Christians were founded by a Mr. Brown, who died only a few years ago in Australia. The Salvation Army is founded by a Mr. and Mrs. Booth, who are alive still. But it is quite other with the Church : that dates back more than eighteen hundred years, to Jesus Christ.

As there are four walls to the Parish Church, so are there four outward and visible tokens by which the Church of Christ may be known.

She is, 1. One ; 2. Holy ; 3. Catholic ; and 4. Apostolic.

1. When we say that the Church is *One*, we mean that she has one and the same faith, revealed by Christ, and taught in all ages ; and that she has one and the same mode of government, under one and the same King.

Her King is Christ—He founded her ; He gave her His authority, His laws ; He breathed into her the spiritual life. He taught her the truth ; and from the time that the Church was founded by Him, she has always taught the same one Catholic Faith, and has had the same

mode of government. You have only to look back through history, and you can see that the Church has always been governed by Bishops, who followed the Apostles, and that from the earliest time she has always taught the same truths. S. Paul says (1 Cor. xii. 12, 13): "The body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." S. Paul points out that in Christ there are not many bodies, not many sects, but only one Church, of which every individual is a member; and he says that it is by the One Holy Spirit, given in Baptism, that we are united to the body, the Church, and so united to the Head, which is Christ.

In His last discourse in the Upper Chamber, our Lord told His disciples that He was a Vine, and they the branches. He is the trunk and root, and all those who belong to Him are like the twigs of the Vine—they all derive their sap and strength from the trunk, and if they are broken off they lose all life.

II. The second mark of the Church is holiness. She teaches how to lead a pure life well pleasing to God, that is, she teaches *duty*. The first mark of the Church is unity of faith. The second mark is the teaching of duty to God and man. She teaches man what he is to believe, and she teaches man what he is to do. But that is not all. She also provides the Sacraments, which are

the channels of grace by which man is enabled to fulfil his duties to God and man, and so attain to holiness. Without the Sacraments real holiness is impossible. Our Lord says that without baptism there is no admission into the Spiritual Kingdom, and that without the Holy Communion there is no spiritual life. And if there be no spiritual life there is no holiness. When, therefore, we say that the Church is holy, we mean that in her man is taught what is necessary for him to attain to holiness, and that in her are those means whereby he is assisted to become holy.

III. The third mark of the Church is Catholicism. Catholic means universal, lasting through all time, and extending through all the world. Now it is very clear that no sect which has sprung up, like a toadstool, a few years ago, can make any claim to be Catholic, because it does not extend back to Christ as its founder, and because it has not the promise given by Christ that it shall last unto the end of the world.

Moreover the Church extends through all the world. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature," was our Lord's commission.

The old Jewish Church was also of God's foundation, but that was not Catholic, for it was only to last for a time, till Christ came and fulfilled its law and sacrifices, and only to extend to the Jewish people. It was not designed to embrace all the nations of the world. It is,

however, quite other with the Christian Church, that is ordained by God to hold within it all people out of every quarter of the world, and also to last through all time.

iv. The fourth mark of the Church is Apostolicity. The Church must have the Apostolic ministry. That is, it must be Episcopal,—governed by Bishops who are the successors of the Apostles. The Apostles were the first founders of the Church, under Christ, they laid their hands on others and ordained them to be Apostles or Bishops to succeed them, and these Bishops sent others. “As *My* Father hath sent *Me*, even so send I you,” said Christ, and as Christ sent the Apostles, so, with the same commission and same authority they sent others. Thus the ministry of the Church is Apostolic, for it is derived in unbroken succession from the Apostles who were sent by Christ, who was sent by God the Father. This is that spiritual generation which Christ promised should not pass away till all be fulfilled, when He was telling His disciples of the signs of the Judgment. They might fear, then, seeing what confusion and changes were taking place all round, but He bade them not be discouraged; kingdoms and nations might fail, but His ministry would remain, a spiritual generation, not changing, not failing, till all is fulfilled.

I dare say, when the Flood began to overflow the earth, that the people began to make boats and rafts for themselves. One thought a flat-bottomed barge would be the

proper thing ; another thought he would have a boat with a keel and a sail ; another strung several barrels together, and put planks on top of them, to make a raft ; another sawed a tree down, and scooped out the inside, as a sort of canoe. They made all kinds of contrivances for saving themselves. Some swam about longer than others, but all were swamped and sunk in the end, only the Ark rode high above the Flood, for that had been made by God's directions, and was guided and protected by Him. So now, there are plenty of sects floating about, some better, and some worse, but all man-invented, and all sure to go to pieces in a few years. Only the Ark of the Church will last, for that is built, and directed, and protected by Christ, and assured safety by His infallible promise.

Remember then, I pray you, the four marks of the true Church. It is *One* in its Faith, it is *Holy* in its teaching, it is *Catholic* in its extension, and it is *Apostolic* in its origin.

SERMON XVIII.

THE CHANCEL.

Praise.

PSALM XCIX. 9.

“O magnify the Lord our God, and worship Him upon His holy hill :
for the Lord our God is holy.”

As I have already explained to you, the two great divisions of the Parish Church, into Body and Chancel, represent the Spiritual Church divided into the part on Earth and the part in Paradise. The Chancel is intended as the figure of Heaven, and the Screen that cuts it off from the Nave is death.

What is the great work of the saints and angels in Heaven? It is the praise and worship of God. “They rest not day and night saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.”

I think that you will find in the Bible quite as much exhortation to worship and praise as to prayer. David speaks of prayer only nine times in the Psalms, but one hundred and forty times of Praise. Many of David's psalms are, indeed, prayers; but more are praises; and he devotes whole psalms to calling on all people and all creatures to praise and magnify the Lord. In Heaven, the angels, and the cherubim and seraphim, and the spirits of the just made perfect are always praising God. "I beheld," said S. John, "and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in Heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever." (Rev. v. 11-14.) S. John also saw an angel calling to all "that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him . . . and worship Him

that made Heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." (xiv. 6, 7.) But not only so, but we are told that a voice came out of the very throne of God, saying, "Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great ;" whereupon, S. John says, " I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him." (xix. 5-7.) So you see we are shown first the example of the angels and saints, then an angel exhorts us to praise, and, lastly, the very throne of God appeals to us to praise and worship.

Praise and worship are duties we owe to God, ■ prayer is a duty. One is as much a duty as the other.

God ordered Moses to make a tabernacle, after the pattern of heavenly things, and in it the Levites were to praise and worship Him continually. Afterwards, before Solomon built the temple, David instituted two hundred and eighty eight singers and players on harps, and cymbals, and horns, to make music and give praise to God in the temple. In the twenty-fifth chapter of the First Book of Chronicles you will read about them, and how, among others, was one called Heman, who had fourteen sons and three daughters. " All these were under the hands of their father for song in the house of the Lord, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps."

David addressed the singers in the house of God when he said, "Behold now, praise the Lord all ye servants of the Lord ; ye that by night stand in the house of the Lord : even in the courts of the house of our God. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary : and praise the Lord." (Psalm cxxxiv.)

About the year four hundred after Christ, when all persecution had ceased, and Christians might come forth from obscurity, and build Churches, and serve God openly, there lived in the East a man called Alexander ; he had been an officer in the army, but he left the army that he might have more leisure to serve God. In his old age, Alexander came to Constantinople with three hundred men who had joined him in the work I am going to describe. They built a dwelling place for themselves, and a great church, and then, Alexander divided them into six choirs, that is, fifty together, and appointed that there should always be fifty in the church together, singing the praises of God in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. Each choir sang for an hour, and then went out, and was relieved by another ; and so, night and day, year in and year out, the church was ringing with the praises of God. In the stillness of the night, in the throng of the day, the ceaseless song went on ; and the people of Constantinople called the place, the Church of the Sleepless Ones.

Alexander desired that from earth the praises of God should rise without ceasing, as in Heaven they rise before the throne without ceasing.

When our Lord Jesus Christ was going to Jerusalem to His death, the Spirit of God moved the children, and they came forth to meet Him ; they cut down branches from the trees, they spread their garments in the way, and as the procession entered Jerusalem they made the walls give back the echo of their cries, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

But there were then, as now, men who considered all these outward marks of worship — uncalled for and improper, and they took offence because our Lord allowed them. They said, "Hearest Thou what these say?" Then Jesus answered, "Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise?" (S. Matt. xxi. 15, 16.) Then they bade Him rebuke His disciples. But He replied, "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." (S. Luke xix. 40.) Yes! had there been no hearts found to render homage, outward homage, then the very stones pressed by His feet as He went about doing good, the stones soon to be wet with His blood, would have found hearts and voices to praise the Majesty which He had laid aside for our sakes, and the love that had brought Him so low.

Worship is given to God for two principal reasons.

1. First, because here on earth we must rehearse that which is to be our work for all eternity in Heaven.

II. Secondly, because here we desire to make amends to God for all the ingratitude that has been shown Him ; to Christ for all the humiliations He endured on earth.

I. I have shown you from Scripture how that in Heaven the angels and the saints are ever engaged in the Praise of God. I have shown you how that when Moses was told to make and order the service of the Tabernacle he was shown the pattern of Heaven. It was so also with the Christian Church. As Moses was shown the worship of Heaven, and bidden make the worship of earth like it, so S. John was shown Heaven opened, that in the Christian Church also, its worship might resemble that of Heaven.

And so the Church calls together all her children to public worship. "O come let us worship, and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker."

As I have already told you, in one of my earlier instructions, worship on Sunday is a *duty* we owe to God. It is a duty that should also be a pleasure. How do you think you will find any happiness in the splendid worship of Heaven, if you find none in that of the Church on earth? If the praise and adoration of God be a weariness to you here once a week, it is likely to be a weariness to you hereafter when it is unceasing.

God has set apart one day out of seven in order that you may assemble on that day in His courts, and there

praise and bow before and adore Him. It is not much. It is that you may get accustomed to the worship you will have to give in Heaven day and night continually.

Some people think that they go to church to hear sermons, but that is quite a secondary matter. The real reason for going to Church is not to listen to a man talking to you, but to kneel before God, and lift your voices and praise Him. Advantage is taken of public worship to tack a sermon on, so as to teach the people ; but that is an after thought, not the real end and aim of divine worship.

II. In the next place, we give God the best praise and thanks we can, because He has been treated with such forgetfulness and impiety by the great body of mankind. We give Him worship to compensate to Him for the ingratitude and rebellion He has met with. So we give Christ our best praises and heartiest worship because He was rejected and despised when on earth. This is the worship in *spirit* and in *truth*, which Christ foretold should be offered Him in the Christian Church.

Because Jesus was denied a home in the inn, we build Him beautiful Churches ; because He was laid in a poor manger, we erect magnificent Altars ; because He was given by men thorns and hyssop and bullrush, we adorn His Altar and Sanctuary with sweet flowers ; because men howled about Him, "Crucify Him ! crucify Him !" we give Him the most beautiful hymns ; because the soldiers

bowed the knee in mockery, we kneel in adoration. The whole of Christian worship is reparation offered to Jesus Christ for the wrongs done Him when He was on earth ; and is the token to Him that we love Him, and desire to do Him all the honour we can. Do you remember how before His death a poor sinful woman came and broke a valuable alabaster box that contained spikenard and poured it over His feet ? Some who saw it done murmured at the waste. But Jesus approved of the woman's act. He said that she had done well, and that what she had done should be reported through the whole world as a memorial of her. But it was something more : it was a lesson to us that we are to go and do likewise—we are to pour out in the worship of Jesus Christ the best we have ; and it shows us Christ's solemn consecration of the very principle on which Christian worship rests.

We show God our Faith, by reciting the creed.

We show God our Hope, by prayer.

We show God our Love, by praise.

Thus, you see, in public worship we show God at once those things He desires most to find in us—faith, hope, and love.

SERMON XIX.

THE ALTAR.

I. *The Sacrifice.*

S. LUKE XXII. 19.

"This do in remembrance of Me."

THINK what it must have been to live in Britain in the times before the Romans conquered our island. The inhabitants were half-naked savages, who stained their faces blue with woad. They lived in circular huts with a fire in the middle, and the smoke escaped out of a hole in the roof. The light entered by the door and chimney. In many places where there is moorland you find clusters of stone rings, these are the fallen walls. In other places you find pits in the ground, these also served as huts. It was a miserable life, but there was something more than the misery of living in such places imperfectly

clothed to make us shrink from the thought of these times. We are told that then the savage Britons offered human sacrifices. They erected figures of their gods of wickerwork, and then thrust them full of men and children, and burnt them all in the horrible idol of woven willow rods.

It was not in our own island only that human sacrifices were offered. Among the inhabitants of Canaan they were common. You may remember how that Moloch is spoken of in the Bible, as having little children passed through the fire to him. Moloch was a great brazen idol of a man, with a beast's head, seated, with the hands held out level. He was hollow, and a fire was lighted inside him, making him red hot, and the flame and smoke came out at the eyes and ears and nostrils and mouth. When he was red hot, then little children, babies, were brought to the idol, and placed in his burning hands. The heathen priests stood round beating drums and clashing cymbals and blowing horns, to drown the screams of the poor little victims.

In the town of Carthage these sacrifices of children took place every year. Whenever there was war, or pestilence, or famine, quantities were killed. They were crucified. Once, when King Agathocles came before the walls of Carthage, the Carthaginians chose out two hundred boys of the best families, the handsomest they could find, and three hundred more offered themselves freely, or were

offered by their parents, and were all sacrificed to obtain from the gods delivery from Agathocles. On another occasion, the general Maleus had been driven out of Carthage, so he gathered an army and marched against the town, and, in order to obtain the favour of the gods, he clothed his own son Castilo in purple, put a crown on his head, and nailed him to a tall cross before his army. The Danes and Norsemen also sacrificed human beings. In Norwegian history we read of a king, On of Sweden, who did not want to die when he was sixty years old, so he sacrificed one of his sons to obtain a long life. After that he lived several years, and then he was frightened, and he sacrificed a second son, and after that, he sacrificed a son every now and then till he had offered seven. Then he was so old that he could not walk, and was carried about in a chair. Yet he was determined to live, and he sacrificed his ninth son, and he was then so feeble that he always lay in bed. Yet he clung to life, and ordered his tenth son to be sacrificed, when he had lost all his teeth, and had to be fed with milk poured out of a horn down his throat. But then the Swedes rose up in rebellion, and refused to allow the only remaining prince, the tenth, to be killed.

There is also a story in Norwegian history of a woman who hung her son in a tree as an offering to the god to teach her how to brew good ale.

When America was discovered, the Spaniards were

horror-struck at the terrible amount of human sacrifice which went on there. But, indeed, all over the world, we find that all men had the idea that God could be reconciled to them by sacrifice.

The Jews, you know, were taught to make sacrifice to God, of bulls and lambs ; but, of course, not of men. How do you suppose it was that all mankind, all round the world, believed in Sacrifice ? That all men everywhere, whatever their religion might be, were agreed in this, that the only way to gain favour with God, and pardon for sin, was through the shedding of blood ?

I will tell you how it was. It was because, really—from the beginning God had revealed to man the truth that Sacrifice must take away sin, and that by the Sacrifice of His only-begotten Son, all the sin of the world would be blotted out. This idea was stamped so deep on their hearts that they ran away with it into all kinds of terrible deeds. God ordered the Sacrifice of beasts among the Jews to be a continual reminder to them of the great Atonement which was to be wrought. But the heathen nations, though they knew in their consciences that they could only be reconciled with God by a Sacrifice, yet did not look on to *One Perfect Sacrifice* which was to come, but thought the horrible sacrifices of men and children which they offered were necessary ; yet they never could satisfy themselves that they were sufficient, so they went on making them more and more horrible. The more ■

sacrifice cost them, the more acceptable they supposed it would be. That is why they went on from offering beasts to sacrificing their own dear children ; they gave their very best to God, because they knew that the best was due to Him. They acted from a right motive, but in blindness and ignorance. *They forgot to look forward*, so they lost themselves in terrible errors, and committed deeds at which our blood runs cold.

Some of you children will be taught in your schools about the old heathen mythologies and religions. I wish you to think of them as leading to Christ, in an uncertain way, yet actually pointing to Him. When the Carthaginian general crucified his son, crowned, and clothed in purple, he did not know quite what he did, but he desired in a blind way to show God how much in earnest he was, and how that he would not withhold his son, his only son from Him. We can read the poor general's heart now, and see how in the dark he was groping and craving for the Son of David, the King of kings, who would die on the Cross to redeem and reinstate man in his lost heritage. So also when King On offered his nine sons as sacrifices to obtain a long life, he knew not what he did, but we can see that deep seated in his heart was a longing for the life eternal ; and he knew that somehow that life was only to be won for him by the death of a son, a royal son.

In the stories the heathen told of their gods, there was much truth mixed up with much fable, and the truth in

these stories pointed to Christ. I will give you an instance or two.

The old Norsemen told of a good god called Baldur, an evil god called Loki hated him, and wanted to kill him. The rest of the gods knew this, so they called all the creatures, animals, plants, stones together, and made them swear not to hurt the beautiful and good Baldur. But they quite forgot the mistletoe, it was so insignificant. Loki knew this, therefore he cut a stick of mistletoe and pointed it, and put it in the hand of a blind man, whom he led into the hall where the gods were assembled, and then he directed his hand, and made him throw it at Baldur, and the mistletoe pierced his heart, and he fell down dead. But the old Norsemen said that though Baldur was dead, yet he would come again in glory and restore the world to happiness, and give peace and plenty. Do you see how that there is in this story some glimmering of truth? Some looking to Christ who was to die and rise again and reign for ever and ever?

In Greece in heathen times they told of a Dionysus who, they said, died for men, and was torn to pieces, and his back cut with ploughs; and every year the heathen met at a certain time and ate and drank in commemoration of the death of Dionysus. Do you see how that here also there is ■ looking to Christ, who died for mankind, and instituted the Holy Communion as a perpetual memorial of His Passion?

In Asia Minor the heathen told of a certain Adonis, who was killed by a tusk of a boar; he was buried. Wherever his blood fell, they said the red anemones sprang up. For a week every year the people wept for Adonis, as for one dead; and they made little garden graves, which they planted with flowers. Then, all at once, their weeping changed to shouts of triumph, for, they said, Adonis was risen, and then they broke down and tore to pieces the little graves they had made.

Do you see how that here also there is a thought of Christ, who died and rose again?

I might go on and tell you many more instances of the heathen religions pointing to Christ, but these must now suffice.

I must go back to sacrifice, of which I began to speak to you. I have shown you how that among the heathen the idea was everywhere spread that man could only be reconciled with God by sacrifice. The Jews also knew this, but they knew as well that the sacrifice which was to atone for sin was beyond what they could offer, and that their sacrifices of bulls and goats and lambs could not take away sins, but would show God that they looked for a Redeemer, the promised Messiah, who would by His One Sacrifice for ever atone for the sins of the world, and open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers.

The Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ were the

turning point of all history, that to which all religions looked, that to which religion now looks back.

As the Jews were bidden to offer sacrifice to God to show Him that they looked *forward* to the One Sufficient Sacrifice, so are we Christians bidden to offer sacrifice to God to show Him that we look *back* to the One Sufficient Sacrifice. The Jews offered animals on the altar in the temple. Christ took away these sacrifices and instituted one in another form—He appointed that Bread and Wine should be used in the new sacrifice. As the body of the beast, and its blood were types of His Body and His Blood, which were to be broken and shed, so, under the New Covenant, He appointed that Bread and Wine should be used, as symbols of His Body and His Blood, which had been broken and shed. Thus, as S. Paul says, as often as the Holy Eucharist is offered, “ye do show the Lord’s death till He come;” that is, you plead the Sacrifice of Christ before God the Father. And as in the Old Covenant the sacrifices were the chief and most solemn of all the rites, so in the New Covenant the Sacrifice of the Altar is the chief and most solemn of all rites. All the other services come in an inferior place, this is the one of Divine appointment, to be done in remembrance of Christ, one in which His Death is to be pleaded till He come.

SERMON XX.

THE ALTAR.

II. *The Communion.*

S. JOHN VI. 56.

"He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him."

THE Holy Eucharist is not only a Sacrifice, it is also a Communion. You will be instructed much further in the doctrine of the Holy Communion when you are about to be confirmed, and I will only give you a very plain and brief account of that doctrine now.

I told you last Sunday how that the whole heathen world held the doctrine of Sacrifice, quite as surely as the Jews, but I told you how that they had forgotten to look forward. Now I must tell you that not only did they hold a doctrine of Sacrifice, but also a doctrine of Communion.

Before, however, I enter upon this, let us get plain before us what we mean by a doctrine of Sacrifice and a doctrine of Communion.

1. By ■ doctrine of Sacrifice this is meant, that all mankind is estranged from God by sin, and that man can not be brought back into the favour of God but by a sacrifice which shall atone for his sin, and take away his transgression.

When the Jews offered sheep and bulls it was to show God that they felt themselves to be sinners, and that they looked forward to the coming of the Messiah, the true Lamb of God, who, by His Death, would make reconciliation for sin.

The heathen, in like manner, when they sacrificed, meant that they were sinners, and that they knew that without shedding of blood was no reconciliation, but they had forgotten, or did not know, that Christ would come to be the One Perfect Sacrifice, so—thinking their offerings of lambs and doves and oxen were insufficient—they began to sacrifice men and women and children.

2. The doctrine of Communion is this. We are fallen men. We have in our bodily natures the seeds of death, and the motions of sin. We seek from God not only pardon for sin, but to be strengthened in body and soul to resist sin, and to overcome death. By sin death came into the world, and we desire some medicine by which we

may conquer the power of sin and death. You know very well why you have the seeds of sin and death in you. It is because you are descended from Adam and Eve. They sinned and fell, and so all their posterity fell with them. You derive your sinful and mortal natures from Adam, because your bodies and your blood derive from Adam's fallen body and sin-poisoned blood. We are told that as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive; that Christ is the Second Adam. As Adam communicated death to us, Christ will communicate life to us. As from Adam we derive our inclination to evil, from Christ we must obtain an inclination to good. Now we derive our readiness to sin from Adam because we inherit his flesh and blood. To obtain power to overcome sin we must partake of Christ's Flesh and Blood. As we die, because our flesh is the sin-poisoned flesh of Adam, we must obtain victory over death by partaking of the sinless, death-conquering Body of Christ.

Christ's risen nature undoes all that Adam's fallen nature has done.

In order to become endued with health and strength to resist sin and overcome death, we must become partakers of the sinless, ever-living Body of Jesus Christ, who will thus become a Second Adam to us.

Before our Lord Jesus Christ died, He instituted the Holy Eucharist, not only to be the perpetual Sacrifice looking back to His Death, but also to be the perpetual Com-

munion of His Body and Blood to us, so as to make us members of Him, partakers of His Divine Life, and to have our flesh leavened with His risen Flesh. Thus, as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all may be made alive. His risen Body is the medicine for our bodies. His Human Soul is the strengthening of our weak souls. His Human Will, in perfect accord with the Divine Will, invigorates our hesitating wills. He gives Himself to us in the Holy Communion to make us partakers of His Nature, that, as He says, we should live by Him.

The heathen had some dim idea of this, and their religion prepared them to accept the truth when it came. They dedicated their sacrifices to God, and then ate of the sacrifices, thinking that as by the death of the beast, their sins were atoned, so by eating of the flesh that had been consecrated to God, they were given grace and strength by God.

The old Persians believed that there was a God who had died for men, who was crushed to death, and they prepared fine white cakes of wheat, and brewed a drink, and they offered these on an altar where a fire ever burned ; but they not only poured the cup into the fire, and burned some of the bread, but they also partook of both, and they did so as eating of the flesh and blood of the god to whom they sacrificed.

I told you last Sunday how in Greece the heathen worshipped a certain Dionysus, who they said had died

for the world. Every three years they celebrated certain rites in his honour. They tore a beast to pieces, drank the blood, and ate the raw flesh; and they did this in memory of Dionysus, who had given his life for men, and who, they said, was the Earth that gives his blood to flow in the grapes to make wine, and his flesh to grow in the wheat to make bread. Was not this a wonderful drawing near by old heathen men to the truth?

I might give you many more instances, but these must suffice.

Among the Jews the Passover was instituted, ■ a feast of which they partook once in the year, in commemoration of the release from Egypt. They ate of an unblemished lamb. Jesus Christ is the true Paschal Lamb, as He is the true Sacrifice. He died on the Cross to finish all the old sacrifices of the Law and of the heathen world; and He is also our Passover who is sacrificed for us that we may eat of His Body, not only to commemorate our release from the bondage of sin, but also that we may live by Him. He said, "I am the Living Bread which came down from Heaven: if any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever: and the Bread that I will give is My Flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, hath eternal life: and I will raise him up at the

last day. For My Flesh is meat indeed, and My Blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, even He shall live by Me."

As Christ lives by the Father, so we live by Him ; and the way by which we derive life from Him, He tells us, is through the Communion of His Body and Blood. We derive our natural bodies, injured and ruined by sin, from Adam ; and we derive our spiritual bodies, restored and made capable of resisting death, and rising to immortality, from Christ. The *way* by which this change is wrought in us is through the touch of His risen Body in the Holy Communion.

7



BV Baring-Gould, Sabine, 1834-1924.
4315 Our parish church; twenty addresses to
B3 children on great truths of the Christian
1886 faith. 2d ed. London, Skeffington, 1886.
viii, 166p. 20cm.

1. Children's sermons. I. Title.
CCSC/mmb

A18283

